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ABSTRACT

This training guide provides guidelines and sample strategies for using the 1989 publication, "The Multigrade Resource Handbook," in a variety of professional settings ranging from teacher training programs to school and district inservice. This guide has been developed primarily for preservice teacher educators working with prospective rural teachers and for educators responsible for carrying out staff development activities. Part I of this guide provides background information on rural school change and staff development and possible uses of the resource handbook in teacher development. Part II describes specific strategies used with educators interested in multigrade instruction. In this part, which is organized to correspond to the chapters in the Multigrade Resource Handbook, the contents of each chapter are briefly reviewed and sample lessons and activities are included. To encourage a reciprocal exchange of participant experience and craft knowledge, the core activities in this training guide are based on cooperative learning structures. An appendix section contains worksheets, forms, and transparency masters to be used in the training sessions. (ALL)

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# A TRAINING GUIDE
## FOR
# THE MULTIGRADE CLASSROOM:
## A RESOURCE HANDBOOK FOR SMALL, RURAL SCHOOLS

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November 1990
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## TRAINER'S GUIDE FOR *THE MULTIGRADE CLASSROOM: A RESOURCE HANDBOOK FOR SMALL, RURAL SCHOOLS*

### Introduction

The purpose of this training guide is to provide individuals with guidelines and sample strategies for using the *Multigrade Resource Handbook* in a variety of professional development settings from teacher training programs to school and district inservice. This guide has been developed primarily for preservice teacher educators working with prospective rural teachers and for educators responsible for carrying out staff development activities. These may be consultants, principals, or teachers who work in settings where students are taught in multigrade classrooms.

There are two parts to this guide. Part I provides background information pertaining to change and staff development in rural settings along with possible ways the *Multigrade Resource Handbook* can be used in teacher development. Part II describes specific strategies we have used in working with educators interested in multigrade instruction. It is organized by the chapters found in the *Multigrade Resource Handbook*. Sample lessons and activities have been presented to illustrate approaches that have been used successfully.

### Part I: Overview and Key Concepts

One may wonder, "Why the concern and emphasis on multigrade classrooms?" Although many countries are moving toward the consolidation of small, single-building schools into larger units, there still exists a large number of schools that operate multigrade classrooms. The most common multigrade situation is the combined, two-grade classroom which continues to be used even in most metropolitan districts. In addition, a large number of multigrade classrooms and schools are found in predominantly rural states such as Alaska, Montana, Idaho and, to a lesser degree, in Oregon and Washington. Our

research on the effectiveness of multigrade instruction indicates that a high level of staff development is needed to assist educators responsible for multigrade classrooms.

We found, in a follow-up survey of consumers of the *Multigrade Resource Handbook* and in workshops we have conducted, that a large number of educators are implementing multigrade programs or exploring the possibility of doing so. In Alaska, for example, teachers involved in the development of the handbook were requested by the Alaska Department of Education to conduct summer workshops on multigrade instruction. We also received a request from a Florida legislative committee considering the adoption of multigrade school organization for its state.

Although large numbers of multigrade programs exit in both rural and metropolitan settings, we have found preservice and inservice opportunities to be nearly non-existent. The *Multigrade Resource Handbook* and this guide are designed to address this void for multigrade educators.

## Guidebook Design

The approach taken in this guide reflects a strong belief that rural community, school, and classroom contexts are unique. Although we can find similarities across settings, it would be presumptuous to believe that a single training guide could be specifically developed for all rural settings. In our own training, we tailor activities to the needs of the rural audience requesting service. However, research-based staff development practices are effective over a wide range of settings. These principles are presented and discussed in "Rural School Change" and "Effective Practices in Rural Staff Development."

The *Multigrade Resource Handbook* is not a hands-on, how-to manual, although it does contain many practical strategies and activities that can be

adapted and used by teachers. The handbook is organized around research-based themes important to multigrade teachers. Each chapter provides an overview of these themes along with illustrations drawn directly from multigrade teachers. Each chapter ends with a list of references and an annotated set of resources, including sources and costs of each item.

For example, the chapter "Instructional Organization and Curriculum" discusses groupwork in the multigrade classroom and focuses on issues of effective practice and implementation strategies. This is followed by a multigrade teacher's description of how students are grouped for instruction in a 4-5-6 grade combination classroom. In the resource section of this chapter is a list of five resource books which provide in-depth information on grouping. In no way do we consider these resources definitive. They provide a starting point for those desiring to improve the quality of their instruction.

**Rural School Change**

Before any staff development activity is contemplated for a rural community, it is essential to understand what Robert Herriott (cited in Hoover, Foley, Boethel & Smith, 1989) calls the "Zone of Tolerance" (p. 6) within which communities allow schools to operate. For example, in an urban setting, the "Zone of Tolerance" is generally quite large. Schools can offer a wide variety of programs that may be at odds with many community-held beliefs before the community becomes intolerant of the programs. In rural settings, this "Zone of Tolerance" is much smaller. Moreover, it should be pointed out that the "Zone of Tolerance," with regard to multigrade classrooms, tends to be wider where geographical and/or economic necessity traditionally have required combining grades. But such situations also need to be understood in light of pedagogically sound reasons for implementing multigrade programs. In the latter case, rural

communities may reveal a very narrow "Zone of Tolerance" toward changing from a single-grade school organization even when there are compelling economic or enrollment downturns.

The reason for this intolerance rests on the historically conditioned belief that single-grade organization is best for students, a lack of awareness that multigrade organization is effective, and the complexity of instruction when grades are combined. These issues have been confirmed in conversations with multigrade teachers. They often point out that they are not appreciated for the demanding amount of time and effort required of a multigrade classroom instructor or appreciated for the quality of instruction they provide. In addition, they often mention that they feel isolated professionally.

The research review in Chapter 1 of the *Multigrade Resource Handbook* has effectively addressed these teacher concerns. Additionally, it can expand the "Zone of Tolerance" by helping decisionmakers understand that positive student outcomes, especially in the affective domain, can and do occur in many multigrade settings. Equally important, it can help administrators, school board members, and the community understand the complexity of multigrade implementation and the corresponding workload required of teachers (see Preface and Chapter 1 in the *Multigrade Resource Handbook*).

In summation, it is critically important to recognize and understand community values and norms and to carefully select programs and approaches which are compatible. However, recognizing community norms does not mean you have to be limited by them if you carefully nurture support for approaches which may differ from community-held expectations. Research suggests that local initiative and control should rest within the school and community if efforts are to be successful.

## Effective Practices in Rural Staff Development

Research on staff development practices in rural settings is rare. However, two recent studies conducted with rural educators, along with an impressive body of research conducted in metropolitan districts, provide clear principles upon which to build rural staff development activities.

Besides understanding the "Zone of Tolerance," there are five key factors to consider when implementing staff development. These factors revolve around the unique work demands faced by rural school staffs:

- Teachers and administrators face heavy, nonspecified duties
- Teachers are responsible for multiple courses, subjects and/or grades
- Staff must have an intimate knowledge of community norms and infrastructure in order to survive
- There are generally lower levels of resources available, especially for staff development
- Isolation reduces opportunities for professional interaction and staff development. (For an in-depth discussion of the unique factors facing rural teachers, see Miller, 1988).

These factors have important implications when working with rural schools. Because rural teachers have heavy work loads, they are especially sensitive to how they spend their time. Rural teachers also must be creative, self-sufficient individuals who are knowledgeable regarding community expectations and values. As a result, their insights and involvement in the content and design of staff development is important. Moreover, opportunities to interact with colleagues around topics and strategies viewed as needed and useful will greatly facilitate transfer of new ideas to the classroom.

Wood and Kleine (1987) conducted a review of the research on rural staff development. They concluded that the number of rural studies available for analysis were too few to make definitive recommendations. However, by

comparing the results of their review with findings from the voluminous research conducted in metropolitan schools, they identified a list of effective staff development practices. Two recent studies conducted in the Southwest (Hoover, Foley, Boethel & Smith, 1989; Stroble & Bratcher, 1990) add credence to Wood and Kleine's conclusions that staff development is most effective when:

- it is focused on school-based improvements of teacher practices
- staff ownership and participation is developed through involvement in selecting the inservice goals and school changes that will be addressed
- teachers and administrators work together to plan the inservice program
- the staff development program is based on clearly identified needs
- participants have the opportunity to try out and practice new behaviors, exchange ideas, and receive helpful feedback
- peer instructors with expertise conduct the inservice
- follow-up assistance is provided to teachers when they return to their classrooms
- participants have the opportunity to control part of how they learn
- self-instruction is emphasized in the inservice activities
- principals participate in all the activities with their teachers (Wood & Kleine, 1988)

A model for guiding the development of effective professional activities can be drawn from this list of effective practices. Table 1 presents core elements of the model along with corresponding instructional practices found to enhance student achievement and motivation in the classroom.

**TABLE 1. A COMPARISON OF EFFECTIVE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND CLASSROOM INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES**

| Professional Development | Classroom Instruction |
|---|---|
| participants help plan | students set own goals |
| program based on needs relevant to work setting | based on student needs and relevant to real world |
| control over aspects of learning including self-instruction | various options for learning: individual whole class, small group, etc. |
| try out and practice new behaviors | apply new behaviors and skills in various settings |
| peer instruction | peer tutoring |
| opportunities to exchange ideas and receive helpful feedback | cooperative workgroups |
| principals actively participate | teacher models and learns with students |

Table 1 demonstrates clear parallels between the type of professional practices which motivate practitioners to transfer what they learn to the classroom and what has been found to improve student motivation and achievement. (For the research upon which this table has been constructed, see Chapters 4 through 7 in the *Multigrade Resource Handbook*.)

### Three Approaches for Using the *Multigrade Resource Handbook*

There are three general approaches to consider in using the *Multigrade Resource Handbook*: 1) as a text for a free-standing teacher education course, 2) as a resource integrated into existing teacher education courses, and 3) with staff development programs. In whatever approach one chooses, we strongly suggest adhering to the research-based practices of professional development illustrated in Table 1. In conducting workshops with teachers, we are more likely to attain

our staff development goals when we model and simulate the expectations and behavior we desire to be transferred to the classroom. Table 1 clearly illustrates parallels between what constitutes effective staff development practices and effective classroom instruction. In other words, to use an old cliche, "What is good for the goose is good for the gander."

**The *Multigrade Resource Handbook* as a Freestanding Course**

The *Multigrade Resource Handbook* could be used for several types of courses. For example, it could be used in a class focusing on instructional organization. Although the handbook's title might mislead one to believe the primary focus is on multigrade instruction, the research base upon which the handbook was built spans traditional, single grades to single-room, multigrade schools. Methods and/or issues such as direct instruction, recitation, cooperative workgroups, classroom management, and classroom design have been covered in the *Multigrade Resource Handbook* and are applicable to all educational settings.

The most logical course for the handbook would be to focus on multigrade classroom organization. However, most teacher preparation institutions focus on preparing teachers for single-grade classrooms and most teacher candidates expect to secure jobs in such settings. Therefore, a course on "Multigrade Classroom Instruction" may draw few students. In fact, at Kansas State University in 1986, a participant in a rural education conference said that a course on "Multigrade Classroom Organization" had to be dropped because of low enrollment. Ironically, it seems that few teachers understand the relationship between multigrade methodology and classroom diversity. Nearly all classrooms are multigrade in terms of the diverse levels of performance and skills students

bring to any given grade level. As much as conventional wisdom purports homogeneous, single-grade student populations, heterogeneity is the norm.

### The *Multigrade Resource Handbook* Integrated Into Existing Courses

This approach would use the *Multigrade Resource Handbook* as a supplement to a variety of courses. Table 2 illustrates the different possible configurations one might consider.

**TABLE 2. PLANNING MATRIX FOR THE *MULTIGRADE HANDBOOK***

| COURSE TOPIC | RELEVANT CHAPTERS: 1. Introduction | 2. Research Review | 3. Classroom Organization | 4. Classroom Mgmt & Discipline | 5. Instruct Organization & Curric | 6. Instruct Delivery & Grouping | 7. Self Directed Learning | 8. Peer Tutoring |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Classroom Management | | | x | x | | | | |
| Research | x | x | | | | | | |
| Instructional Organization | | | | | x | x | | |
| History of Education | x | x | | | | | | |
| Teaching Methods | | | | | x | x | x | x |
| School Curriculum | | | x | | x | x | | x |
| Models of Instruction | | | | | x | x | x | x |
| Instructional Design | | | | | | x | | x |
| Peer Learning | | | | | x | | x | |
| Learning Cognition | | | | | x | | x | |
| Sociology of Education | x | | | | x | x | | |
| School Improvement | | x | x | x | x | x | x | |
| Classroom Discipline | | | x | | | | | |
| Rural Sociology | x | x | | | x | | | |

For example, if a course were to be offered on classroom management, Chapter 2 (Classroom Organization) and Chapter 3 (Classroom Management and Discipline) may be used to supplement a main text. Since both chapters have been written in an interactive format (i.e., checklists, planning forms, etc.), they may serve as points for applying concepts developed from the main text. In addition, many of the examples used in the *Multigrade Resource Handbook* which were submitted by teachers can serve as *windows into actual practices* for generating discussion.

**The *Multigrade Resource Handbook* with Staff Development**

In our view, the most far-reaching application can be found in staff development, where most of our experience lies. The suggestions and examples that follow reflect our experience and the underlying belief that staff development must, where possible, reflect/simulate desired classroom practice. This approach is in keeping with the principles of staff development discussed earlier.

**The Approach We Use**

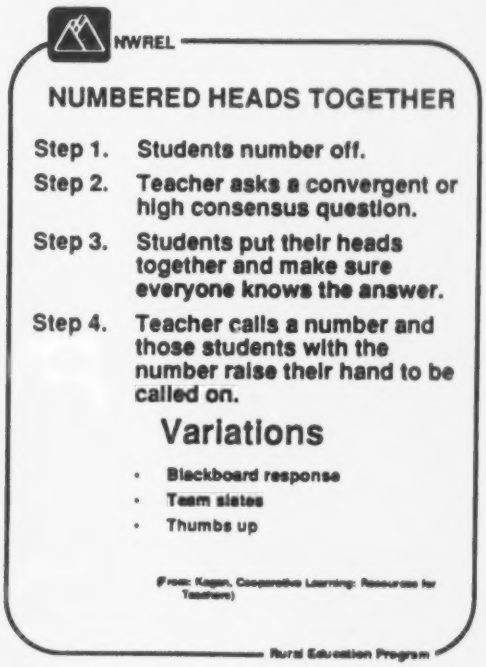
Drawing heavily from the research on cooperative workgroups (Cohen, 1986), especially the structural approach to cooperative learning (Kagan 1989), we have designed workshop activities requiring high levels of participant engagement, peer interaction, and decision making. Our focus has been primarily on modeling through experiential learning activities rather than on "telling" through lecture and recitation. We believe staff development outcomes are a result of the structure you provide. In other words, if you want participants to share ideas, then provide a learning structure that requires sharing. At the same time, provide them with a set of rules or guidelines that have application for the classroom. In emphasizing this approach, we have adhered to a simple, but effective paradigm:

- Present only enough information to complete the task
- Model or show how the activity will be carried out using overhead transparencies and handouts
- Have participants practice and apply new concepts on content related to classroom practice
- Provide time to reflect and debrief
- Provide opportunity to discuss and/or develop applications for their classrooms.

To facilitate the implementation of these practices, six cooperative learning structures have been used:

**Numbered Heads** (Figure 1) is designed to promote equal and active participation while modeling a strategy participants can use in their classrooms.

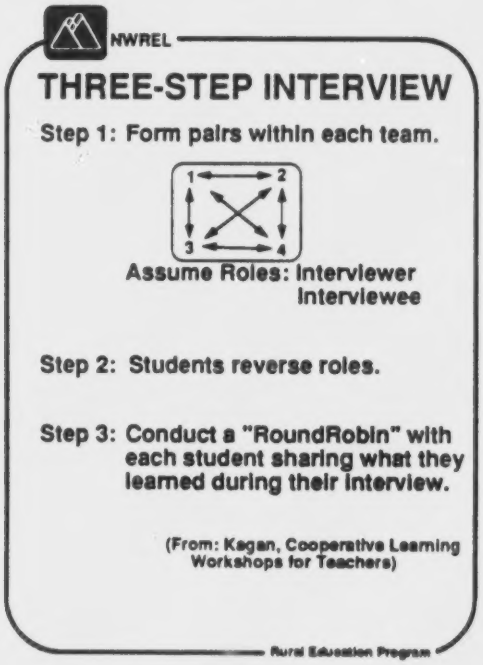
**FIGURE 1. NUMBERED HEADS**


NWREL
NUMBERED HEADS TOGETHER
Step 1. Students number off.
Step 2. Teacher asks a convergent or high consensus question.
Step 3. Students put their heads together and make sure everyone knows the answer.
Step 4. Teacher calls a number and those students with the number raise their hand to be called on.
Variations
Blackboard response
Team slates
Thumbs up
From: Kagan, Cooperative Learning: Resources for Teachers)
Rural Education Program

In this learning structure, participants work in small groups of about four. By randomly calling a number and varying the method of response (i.e. blackboard, team slates, thumbs up), a workshop presenter or classroom teacher reduces the tendency to call on the few who are first to respond to questions. It also increases participant engagement because group members work hard to ensure everyone understands the question and the answer.

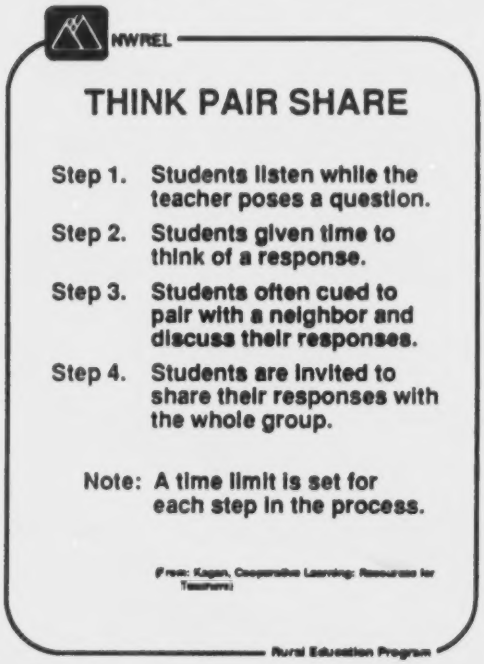
The **Three-Step Interview** (Figure 2) is designed to help build small group relations while introducing participants to role-taking behavior. Variations may be used in large groups where participants pair up, interview each other, and then get into groups of four where they introduce who they interviewed. This involves sharing what they learned about their new acquaintance.

**FIGURE 2. THREE-STEP INTERVIEW**



**Think Pair Share** (Figure 3) may be used with small groups or in a large group setting. It is designed to provide peer support, increase active participation and generate ideas. Because individuals are given specific think time and then requested to pair up and share, the value of wait time and peer sharing is reinforced. This approach tends to reduce competition and build peer relations.

**FIGURE 3. THINK PAIR SHARE**


NWREL
THINK PAIR SHARE
Step 1. Students listen while the teacher poses a question.
Step 2. Students given time to think of a response.
Step 3. Students often cued to pair with a neighbor and discuss their responses.
Step 4. Students are invited to share their responses with the whole group.
Note: A time limit is set for each step in the process.
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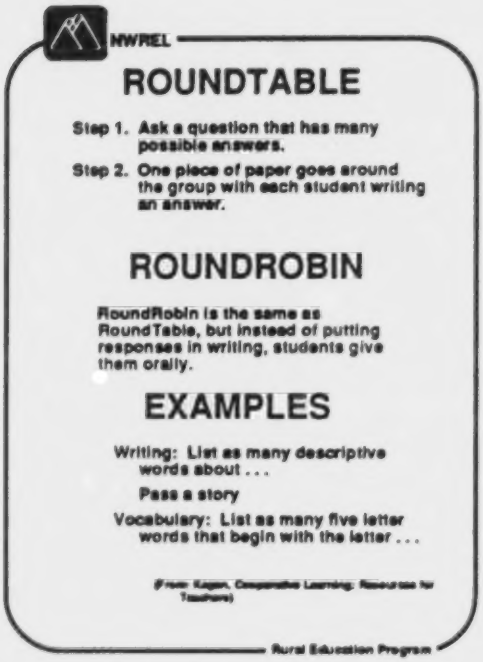
**Roundtable/RoundRobin** (Figure 4) is a cooperative learning structure that many teachers use, but without giving it a specific name. It is often used to increase involvement and assure everyone has a chance to share their point of view. For example, participants might be asked to jot down or think of the benefits of student groupwork. Then they would share their ideas in a circular movement, with everyone having an opportunity to talk. Passing a slip of paper around and writing out one's ideas works especially well with more reluctant participants because it gives them a chance to think and build from the written

responses of other group members. However, it is important to stress that an individual may pass and not say anything until the next round. This provides security and the necessary wait time some individuals may need.

**FIGURE 4. ROUNDTABLE/ROUNDROBIN**


NWREL
ROUNDTABLE
Step 1. Ask a question that has many possible answers.
Step 2. One piece of paper goes around the group with each student writing an answer.
ROUNDROBIN
RoundRobin is the same as RoundTable, but instead of putting responses in writing, students give them orally.
EXAMPLES
Writing: List as many descriptive words about . . .
Pass a story
Vocabulary: List as many five letter words that begin with the letter . . .
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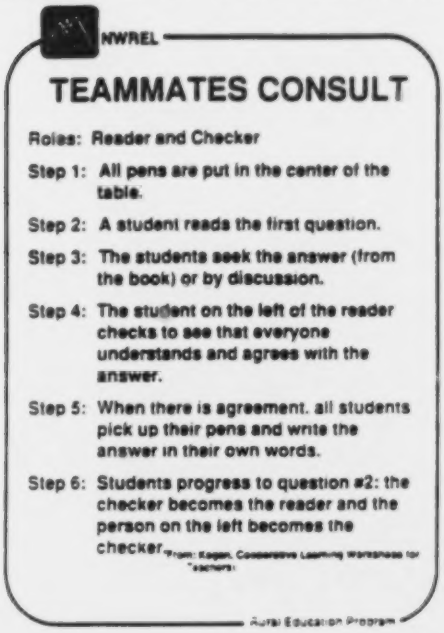
**Teammates Consult** (Figure 5) provides a secure base upon which individuals can share ideas, learn to assume different roles, and, most importantly, create a non-competitive instructional setting for learning new concepts and ideas. This cooperative structure has most often been used when participants are reviewing materials and concepts. In this sense, it provides a check on understanding and a means of self-evaluation.

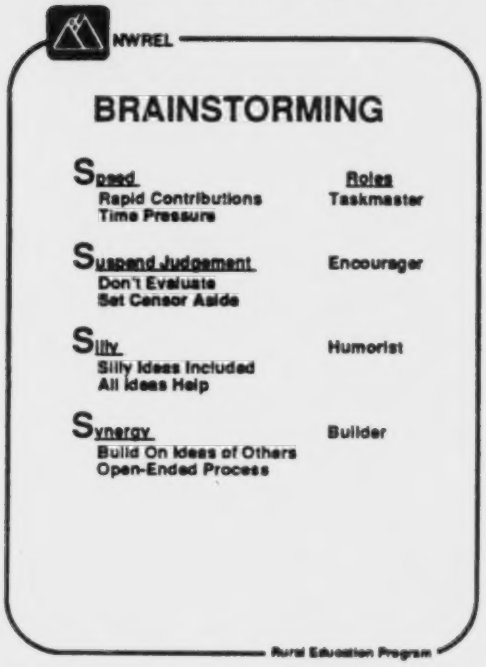
## FIGURE 5. TEAMMATES CONSULT


NWREL
TEAMMATES CONSULT
Roles: Reader and Checker
Step 1: All pens are put in the center of the table.
Step 2: A student reads the first question.
Step 3: The students seek the answer (from the book) or by discussion.
Step 4: The student on the left of the reader checks to see that everyone understands and agrees with the answer.
Step 5: When there is agreement, all students pick up their pens and write the answer in their own words.
Step 6: Students progress to question #2: the checker becomes the reader and the person on the left becomes the checker.

**Brainstorming** (Figure 6) is a common process strategy used by the workshop presenter and teachers. However, the structured approach presented here allows participants to play different roles, have fun, and internalize the key concepts underlying the activity (i.e. suspend judgment, synergy, and speed). By using this with teachers, the workshop presenter models a way for the teacher to implement brainstorming in a systematic, but productive format in the classroom.

In addition to these six key cooperative learning structures, introductory warm-up activities help participants get to know one another and facilitate the formation of small, four-member workgroups.

**FIGURE 6. BRAINSTORMING**




In the language of cooperative learning advocates, such warm-ups are called "class building" (see Kagan, 1989). Finally, staff development sessions end with a personal goal-setting activity (Figure 7) and an evaluation of the workshop. Putting these components together provides a useful outline or guide for designing staff development:

I. Introduction and Warm-up (class building)

   A. Group formation (form small workgroups)

II. Structured Small Group Activities

   A. Modeling (demonstrate with practice what will be done in workgroups)

   B. Practice (small group work with application)

   C. Reflection (time to think and discuss application with students)

D. Application (discuss, share, develop materials/plans for classroom use)

III. Conclusion

A. Personal goal setting/follow-up ("What do I do when I return to my classroom?")

B. Evaluation (evaluating the effectiveness of the workshop)

## FIGURE 7. PERSONAL GOAL SETTING WORKSHEET

**SETTING A GOAL FOR IMPROVEMENT**

**Name** _____ **Date** _____

1. GOAL (What do you desire to do?):

2. YOUR PLAN (What will you do to achieve the goal):

3. EVALUATION (How will you know you have achieved your goal?):

It is best if staff development can be spread out over several sessions. However, rural schools often are constrained by isolation and limited resources, thus reducing the opportunity for follow-up. To help compensate for this, most overhead transparencies are designed to be used with students and are provided to participants. We also provide key resource articles and references for follow-up on the workshop activities.

**Evaluating Staff Development Participants**

An important issue that cuts across all approaches to staff development, whether at the preservice or inservice level is, "How should staff development participants be evaluated?" The most effective evaluation is one that enhances participant involvement by providing growth-promoting feedback while modeling practices that can be transferred to the classroom setting. In considering which strategies to use, workshop leaders, professors of education, and others engaged in staff development activities need to be mindful of key variables which are likely to be impacted by evaluation practices: test anxiety, self-efficacy, instrinsic motivation, attributions for success and failure, and cooperation among individuals. In other words, the approach chosen for evaluation can negatively or positively affect the learner and the group in various, predictable ways. Being critically aware of these variables, and of specific strategies for structuring evaluation in order to have the greatest positive impact, is vitally important to those responsible for the learning environment, and, ultimately, to the learner.

There are two general target areas of evaluation which are equally applicable in the classroom and in a staff development setting: 1) monitoring of performance, and 2) evaluative feedback. Four general practices have been

found which minimize the negative effects often associated with conventional, norm-driven approaches to evaluation:

1. Give opportunities to improve performance.
2. Use criteria of individual progress, improvement and mastery.
3. Involve individuals in self-evaluation.
4. Make evaluation private and meaningful (Ames, 1990).

In conducting staff development activities, it can be productive to share these four general practices with participants and, using a cooperative structure such as **RoundRobin**, have them develop specific strategies for implementation in the staff development setting as well as in the classroom.

In a classroom setting where small workgroups are used, evaluation can become problematic since it is often difficult to determine individual performance in relationship to group performance. For example, if a group task for workshop participants is to complete the design of an activity for involving students in self-evaluation in a classroom setting, how can the performance of individuals in the workshop be assessed?

Kagan (1989), Slavin (1986) and Johnson, Johnson, Holubec and Roy (1984) have established strategies for holding individuals and groups accountable. The following represent a few examples commonly used:

- Individual grades are based on the group product grade
- Each individual is responsible for one part of the total product and is graded accordingly
- Group members work together to prepare different aspects of a final product, but the final product is completed individually
- Each individual uses a different colored pen during written activities, thus indicating the amount of involvement
- Group members evaluate the group and/or each individual member
- Growth scores are used and averaged into the group's total score (the more you grow, the greater the group and/or individual score)

There are many variations possible. But both individual and group accountability are necessary or some individuals will do all the work. In addition, the type of task determines the most appropriate evaluation strategy. For example, if participants are brainstorming a list of evaluation strategies using a **RoundRobin** structure, then colored pens and self-evaluation may be the most appropriate strategy. In a similar manner, if a group is required to develop a report on the preparation of thematic curriculum units, then individuals could each take a role in developing a specific part of the report. Individuals could then be graded on their contribution as well as on the final report.

### Part II: Sample Strategies and Activities

The following sections of this guide will present a brief overview of topics presented in each *Resource Handbook* chapter along with sample activities and suggestions. Activities and strategies described in this part of the guide, but these are not intended to be comprehensive. Nevertheless, we have tried to provide guidance for using a chapter along with a sample activity.

Even though we have divided the content into major topic areas and organized these into chapters, there still remains a large degree of topic interrelationship. For example, Chapter 2 (Classroom Organization) focuses on the physical setting of the classroom. Chapters 3 and 4 concern themselves with classroom management and instructional delivery. In the real world, it is impossible to separate how the classroom is organized from classroom management or instructional delivery. In other words, a teacher choosing to use cooperative learning also must addrress the physical arrangement of the classroom and the management of student routines and behavior that relate to small workgroup cooperation.

In terms of organizational format, we have included a copy of the table of contents from each chapter for easy reference along with space for you to make notes. In addition, for each assignment reproduced in miniature, we have included a full-size version in the appendix in the event you would like to try one out.

*"The first thing that comes to mind is training. They gave me these binders and said, 'These are objectives and what not, TEACH IT.' I was very confused ... Everyone said it was easy to do – no training necessary. I don't agree with sending in a first year teacher to teach combined classes without training. I don't think it does justice to the students. I struggled my first year and I really feel the students suffered ... I have been teaching for three years now and I think the multigrade classroom has advantages for students. If you don't separate them into grades, they learn to accept each other. I think the whole self-concept improves. I really feel I've come to an agreement where we are partners in a family unit. I don't think I could get that out of a single-grade classroom."*

*– Cheryl Mikolajcvyk*
*multigrade teacher*

# Using the Introduction and Chapter 1

# A Review of the Research on Multigrade Instruction

Chapter 1 (Table 3) describes multigrade classroom research and provides a powerful tool for developing community and school staff awareness of key issues relating to multigrade organization.

**TABLE 3. CONTENTS FOR CHAPTER 1**


Quantitative Studies: Student Achievement ..... 4
Quantitative Studies: Student Attitudes ..... 9
Summary ..... 13
Qualitative Studies: A View From the Inside ..... 14
Establishing the Needs of the Multigrade Teacher ..... 15
Instruction in Two-Grade Combined Classrooms ..... 21
Staff Interviews ..... 23
Direct Observation ..... 26
Summary ..... 30
Instruction in a Multigrade Classroom with More Than Two Grades ..... 31
Summary ..... 38
Conclusion ..... 39
Implications ..... 44
References ..... 47


Chapter 1 affirmed the strong conviction of multigrade educators that student outcomes, especially in the affective domain, are not harmed by being in a multigrade classroom. In fact, outcomes may be enhanced. In addition, teaching in a multigrade environment can be an exciting and rewarding experience. However, it also is more work requiring higher levels of community and administrative support.

In working with teachers, we have used this chapter to provide a context upon which to stimulate discussion. Figure 8 has been used as a self-assessment tool after Chapter 1 has been read, and as an advanced organizer designed to frame key issues found in the research prior to groupwork. Figure 9 illustrates a groupwork assignment which multigrade teachers can use with students. This assignment also facilitate development of self-directed and

cooperative behaviors. It is a format we use often and it will be found in subsequent chapters.

One should not be limited, however, to the beginning strategies discussed here. In Alaska, for example, one large, remote district conducted a jigsaw activity with administrators who were linked together using distance technology. Each administrator read a section of the handbook and then, while electronically linked, reported and discussed what had been learned.

## FIGURE 8. MULTIGRADE RESEARCH AWARENESS RATING ACTIVITY

Name_____ School_____

July 12, 1990 State/County_____

**Part I: Rating importance of selected topics.**

Circle the appropriate number, where 4 means "very important" and 1 means "not important."

| In my multigrade classroom . . . | not important | | | very important |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. organizing the classroom for student independence is: | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 2. peer tutoring is: | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 3. developing independence is: | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 4. grouping students across grade levels is: | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 5. organizing instruction to enhance cooperation is: | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 6. developing student interdependence is: | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 7. predictable instructional patterns are: | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

**Part II: True and False (circle the correct one)**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Graded classrooms have grown from the needs of students. | T | F |
| 2. Most multigrade teachers have been trained for working with multiple grades at the same time. | T | F |
| 3. Instructional complexity increases with the number of grades taught together in the same classroom. | T | F |
| 4. Multigrade students perform significantly better than single grade students in the basic skills area. | T | F |
| 5. Multigrade classrooms tend to enhance student attitudes toward school, peer relations, and self-concept. | T | F |
| 6. Most teachers are adequately prepared for teaching small groups. | T | F |
| 7. Whole-class instruction is best with convergent tasks. | T | F |



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## FIGURE 9. GROUPWORK ASSIGNMENT FOR MULTIGRADE RESEARCH

**ASSIGNMENT: Reviewing the Research on Multigrade Instruction**

**GOAL:** Learn about the research on multigrade instruction and describe the implications you find for your own teaching situations.

**RESOURCES:** *Resource Handbook*: Introduction (page IX ff) and Chapter 1

**INSTRUCTIONS.** All groups will read the Introduction. In addition, you will be given additional sections to read. Mark these on the table of contents.

Use the Notes/Implications section below to jot down your ideas for the different sections you read.

After reading the Introduction, come to agreement as a group on at least 3 key issues that relate to your own teaching situation. These will be shared with the total group.

After reading the sections assigned to your team, prepare and give a short presentation of the key points found. Each team will do a presentation over their reading.

| Section | NOTES/IMPLICATIONS |
|---|---|
| | |
| REPORT | |
| EVALUATION | How could this assignment (your performance) be evaluated? |

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## Notes for Additional Activities

*"The drinking fountain, pencil sharpener and bathroom privileges account for the most out-of-seat traffic jams. Therefore, these are all located on the same wall and direction (corner) of the room. It seemed reasonable to put paper and pencil supplies and baskets for finished work on top of a bookshelf in this same area, and to focus study group tables, the teacher resource area and quiet reading corners on opposite walls so there would be limited traffic, noise and distractions."*

*– Pat Reck*
*multigrade teacher*

# Using Chapter 2

# Classroom Organization

Classroom Organization is the easiest to use and most direct chapter in the handbook. It provides an overview of topics to consider (Table 4) when physically arranging the classroom.

**TABLE 4. CONTENTS FOR CHAPTER 2**


The Activity Centers Approach ..... 55
General Considerations When Planning ..... 56
- Activity and Noise Level ..... 57
- Using Visual Barriers to Define Activity Areas ..... 57
- Teacher Resources ..... 58
- Student Resources ..... 58
- Traffic Patterns ..... 58
- Specifying Activity Centers for Students ..... 59
- Accommodating Age Differences ..... 59
- Student Belongings ..... 60

Explaining Your Room Arrangement ..... 61
Floor Plan Design ..... 61
Designing Your Own Room ..... 65
- Three Design Steps ..... 65
  - Step 1: Describing The Way It Is Now ..... 66
  - Step 2: Deciding on the Types of Activities That Will Occur ..... 67
  - Step 3: Drawing the Final Plan ..... 68

Conclusion ..... 69
References ..... 70
Resources ..... 71


Chapter 2 then provides a planning activity for designing your own classroom. This chapter can also stimulate discussion about the relationship between physical setting, task structure, and the development of desired student behavior. If, for example, you desire to develop self-direction and independence in students, then the classroom needs to be organized in ways to enhance such behaviors.

The assignment illustrated in Figure 10 structures individual and group exploration of the topics found in this chapter. Although this assignment is designed more for novice teachers, it could be modified and used with more experienced teachers as well. For example, the introductory material in this chapter could be used as a checklist of key topics for self-evaluation after a teacher has made a drawing of his or her classroom.

## FIGURE 10. CLASSROOM ORGANIZATION ACTIVITY

**ASSIGNMENT: Learning about Classroom Organization**

**GOAL:** 1. Learn about organizing your classroom.
2. Design a classroom floor plan.

**Resources:** *Resource Handbook:* Chapter 2

**PART I**

**Instructions:** Read pages 55-69 (through the conclusion) in Classroom Organization. Using the cooperative structure, **Teammates Consult**, answer the following questions. Remember to write the answers in your own words after the team decides on the answer.

**Question:**
1. Why is it important to design the way you want your classroom organized and to explain the organization to your students?
2. Describe the "Activity Centered Approach" to classroom organization?
3. Name the six types of activities found in most classrooms.
4. Why should a teacher plan for traffic patterns?
5. Name at least two types of activity centers you might use in your classroom and why you would use them. (Hint: each team member may have a slightly different answer.)

**PART II**

**Instructions:** Read pages 65-69 (starting with Designing your own room). Think about how you would like to arrange your classroom. Discuss it with your teammates. Then, complete steps 1-3 for designing your room. After you have completed designing your room, pair up and conduct a **Three-Step Interview** regarding the the design of your partners' classroom.

**Evaluation:** How would you evaluate these two activities in order to build interdependence and accountability? As a team, come up with several answers.



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## Notes for Additional Activities

*"I found that we had to set up some pretty rigid guidelines at the first of the year. Basically it was four or five rules and the biggest part was that no student had the right to disturb and stop the education of another student. We worked on basically that one rule and then on students learning to be independent."*

*– Phil Gillies*
*multigrade teacher*

*"At the beginning of the year, we decided all the rules. I don't have more than seven. The kids are part of the deciding: I am not a dictator. This is a whole class and we are a family that works together. I decided the consequences because I have to enforce the rules. So the consequences are mine, but the rules with my guidelines are what we set."*

*– Robin Lovec*
*multigrade teacher*

## Using Chapter 3

# Classroom Management and Discipline

Classroom management and the development of positive classroom behavior is an especially high priority in the multigrade classroom. The wide diversity of student developmental and academic levels places a great demand on teacher organization and planning. The handbook provides information on helping educators successfully manage this diversity. Chapter 3 (Table 5) is most effective when used in conjunction with other chapters, especially Chapter 2 which focuses on classroom organization.

**TABLE 5. CONTENTS FOR CHAPTER 3**


Three Phases of Classroom Management and Discipline ..... 76
- Phase I: Preparing for the Beginning of School ..... 77
- Phase II: Beginning the School Year ..... 78
- Phase III: Maintaining Good Discipline ..... 79

Organizing Your Classroom and the Materials in It ..... 80
- Storing Personal Belongings ..... 81
- The General Classroom: Curriculum Materials and Supplies ..... 81

Organizing Teacher Activities in the Classroom ..... 85
- Attendance and Other Managerial Procedures ..... 86
- Daily Announcements ..... 87
- Student Strategies for Obtaining Help ..... 87

Organizing Student Activities ..... 89
- Guide For Students ..... 89

Establishing Procedures and Rules in Your Classroom ..... 92

References ..... 106

Resources ..... 107


Figure 11 provides a matrix that can be used to cross-reference classroom management and discipline topics with related sections of the handbook. For example, if managing "teacher-led small groups" was a staff development area, participants could locate readings in Chapter 1, (page 31), Chapter 3, (pages 97 and 102), and in Chapter 5, (page 183).

We have used this matrix during jigsaw activities, where small workgroups prepare information on a variety of classroom management topics and share their

information across the various workgroups. The matrix stresses the interrelated nature of classroom variables such as task structure, classroom organization, and instructional grouping.

**FIGURE 11. CROSS REFERENCE MATRIX**

| | ***RESOURCE HANDBOOK* LOCATION** | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **TOPIC AREA** | **Introduction** | **Chapter 1** | **Chapter 2** | **Chapter 3** | **Chapter 4** | **Chapter 5** | **Chapter 6** | **Chapter 7** |
| Whole Class Instruction | | 36ff | | | | 179 | | |
| Teacher-led small groups | | 31ff | | 97ff 102ff | | 183 | | |
| Cooperative workgroups | | | | | 124 | 201 | | |
| Individual seatwork (independent work) | | 25ff | | | | 193 | | |
| Transitions between activities | | | 55 | | 112ff | | | |
| Room and equipment use | | | 55 | 94ff | | | | |
| Tutoring students | | | | | | | | 244 |
| Giving/receiving assignments | | | | | | | | |
| Case Examples | | | | | | | | |
| Rules | | | 94ff | | | | | |
| Schedules | | | | 112-120 | | | | |
| Other: | | | | | | | | |

Understanding this is especially important to novice teachers who too often fail to grasp this interconnectedness.

Another effective activity is to have teachers present the strategies they use to facilitate classroom management and student behavior. Figure 12 (from the planning guide beginning on page 102) provides a sample guideline for

**FIGURE 12. ILLUSTRATION OF OBSERVATION CHECKLIST**

**IV. Procedures During Small Groups**

**A. Movement Into and Out of Groups**

| | |
|---|---|
| 1. How will students know when to come to their groups? | 1. |
| 2. What procedures, rules, and teacher signals (cues) will need to be taught to students regarding movement to and from small groups? | 2. |
| 3. What will students do with materials used prior to coming to a group? | 3. |

**B. Bringing Materials to the Group**

| | |
|---|---|
| 1. What materials or supplies should students bring or not bring to the group and how will you explain this beforehand? | 1. |

**C. Expected Behavior in Small Groups**

| | |
|---|---|
| 1. How and when can students ask questions and give responses? | 1. |
| 2. What expectations do you have for how students are to work together and how will you convey your expectations so students learn these? | 2. |

**D. Expected Behavior of Students Not Meeting in a Group with the Teacher**

| | |
|---|---|
| 1. What will the rest of the class be doing while you are meeting with a small group that will reduce its need for you? | 1. |
| 2. What will you expect regarding noise level and student access to you? | 2. |
| 3. How will students learn your expectations regarding behavior when not in a teacher group (e.g., getting help, noise, leaving the room, etc.)? | 3. |



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topic areas to consider. For example, if a group presented strategies for small group instruction in the multigrade classroom, they could use this checklist to organize their ideas. This format also has been useful in working with prospective or novice teachers. In these cases, the checklist is used as a guide for collecting data during classroom observation. Once data is collected, workshop or class participants meet in small groups and share their observations. Furthermore, such a process also could be used with experienced teachers who might observe in different classrooms or schools.

Written or video-taped/ case studies which illustrate management or discipline issues are another strategy to help participants develop understanding. Sources for case study examples can be gathered in numerous ways. Throughout the handbook, case studies illustrate various aspects of multigrade classroom instruction. For example, on page 195 in Chapter 5, Joel Anderson describes the history of grouping in his multigrade classroom; on page 199, Barbara Robinson describes grouping in a primary classroom; and on page 245, teachers describe incidental tutoring. Teachers' experiences and classroom observations also are excellent sources of case illustrations. When written up and used to focus group problem solving and discussion, these become an effective way of bringing the classroom into the workshop setting.

In using Chapter 3, it is important to remember that the greatest impact on workshop participants will occur through simulated or direct experience, time to share and discuss ideas, and development of concrete plans for action.

## Notes for Additional Activities

*"You have to be organized. I was lucky when I first started teaching. I was with another teacher who had taught in rural schools. If I had gone into the school and been the only teacher, I am sure I would have been really lost. But that helped because she seemed to be really organized. You need to have a schedule and know exactly what you're going to be doing and when you're going to do it. The kids don't have to be that scheduled, but you do ... Have time fillers (and) independent activities for the kids to work on when they are not working with you."*

*– Darci Shane*
*multigrade teacher*

# Using Chapter 4

# Instructional Organization and Curriculum

Chapter 4 (Instructional Organization and Curriculum) provides the conceptual underpinings for the strategies described in Chapter 5 (Instructional Delivery and Grouping). Nevertheless, there are many concrete strategies and examples to be found in Chapter 4.

Table 6 presents the contents of Chapter 4. The topics presented are built around a conception of the classroom as a social system (Cohen, 1986). Students, as participants in this social system, are heavily influenced by the organization of the classroom environment. This includes how time and learning

**TABLE 6. CONTENTS FOR CHAPTER 4**


Time and Achievement in the Classroom ..... 112
Summary and Implications ..... 116
Instructional Quality and Student Effort ..... 120
Student Effort ..... 121
The Goal Structure of Different Types of Instructional Organization ..... 123
Competitive Goal Structure ..... 123
Individualistic Goal Structure ..... 124
Cooperative Goal Structure ..... 124
Matching Instructional Organization with the Needs of Students ..... 126
The Unidimensional Classroom ..... 129
The Multidimensional/Multiability Classroom ..... 131
Implications ..... 133
Task Structure and the Effective Teacher ..... 134
Strategies for Instructional Organization ..... 138
Altering Existing Practice ..... 138
Curriculum ..... 140
The Hidden Curriculum ..... 140
The "Planned" Curriculum ..... 141
What do students need to know? ..... 143
How will I help them learn it? ..... 144
What resources will I use? ..... 144
How will I know if the students have learned it? ..... 145
References ..... 147
Resources ..... 149




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are structured; whether instruction unfolds as a highly teacher-centered event, whether student ability is given greater significance than student effort, and how competency and social status are defined in the daily lives of students.

This chapter assumes that the curriculum which is hidden or implicit in the daily lives of students has a powerful effect on student self-concept, social relationships, and learning. This is an especially important issue when working in a multigrade setting. Because of the complexity of the multigrade environment, it is critical that students develop self-directed, independent behaviors and learn to be socially responsible for not only themselves, but for members of their classroom. Socially responsible students help each other, respect diversity, and work together for the well-being of the entire class.

In classrooms where students demonstrate these "proactive" social behaviors, the teacher is free to work individually with those most in need (especially younger children). It is, therefore, incumbent upon staff developers working with multigrade educators to develop both the awareness and the strategies that have been demonstrated to build the type of learning environment which leads to socially responsible and self-directed learners.

Although this chapter is conceptually complex, it does provide specific examples which help to ground the theoretical issues in actual classroom practice. For example, issues of time and their impact on student learning are discussed and then followed by actual examples of classroom schedules (see pages 118 - 120). Moreover, because the research on multigrade instruction suggests that the importance of clear and predictable routines are important to the success of the multigrade classroom, we chose the development of a classroom schedule as an initial activity for the use of this chapter. Figure 13 depicts an assignment focusing on time and scheduling.

## FIGURE 13. ASSIGNMENT 1: SCHEDULING CLASSROOM TIME

**ASSIGNMENT 1: Learning about Instructional Organization**

**GOAL:**
1. Learn what makes for the effective use of time in the classroom.
2. Learn how to allocate time for learning.
3. Develop a classroom schedule.

**Resources:** *Resource Handbook*: Chapter 4, "Instructional Organization and Curriculum"

**PART I: Effective Use of Instructional Time**

**Instructions:** Read pages 107-115. Using the cooperative structure, **Teammates Consult**, answer the questions and complete the tasks described below. Remember to write the answers in your own words after the team decides on the answer.

**Questions/: Tasks**

1. What are the three key dimensions of effectively using time in the classroom?
2. Figure the available instructional minutes for your practicum teaching (p.11). (Hint: you may need to discuss this with a colleague in terms of dismissal times, breaks, snack, etc.)
3. Decide on instructional priorities (p.112) and figure the amount of time that will be spent on each priority (e.g., reading, writing, grammar, speaking, etc.) It may be helpful to review pages 136-141 ("The Planned Curriculum" section) and discuss with a colleague.

**Evaluation:** How would you evaluate these two activities in order to build interdependence and accountability? As a team, come up with several answers.

**PART 2: Developing an Instructional Schedule**

**Instructions:** As a team, develop an instructional schedule that can be clearly understood by students. Use pages 113-115 as a guide. Be prepared to share your schedule with the whole group.

**Evaluation:** How would you evaluate these two activities in order to build interdependence and accountability? As a team, come up with several answers.

Like assignments presented above, this one simulates key elements we feel are important if you desire to develop self-direction and independence within students as well as interdependence among students. These include:

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- Statement of the goal or purpose of the assignment
- Resources needed
- Instructions
- Focusing question
- Clear task
- Learning structure aligned with task complexity (e.g. **Teammates Consult**)
- Evaluation
- Application

Figure 14 provides a second example of an assignment we used. In this assignment, the activities are mainly designed to develop awareness of classroom organizational strategies such as goal structure, varying the modes of instructional delivery, impact of evaluation practices on students, and the appropriate application of convergent and divergent task structure.

The **Modified Jigsaw** suggested in this activity requires that four-member teams assign each member a number (from 1 to 4). Expert teams, consisting of individuals with the same number, are convened in order to read a specific section of the material. For example, in Figure 14, all "ones" read an assignment as a group, then seek out the answer to question number 1. They reach consensus regarding their group response and then write the answer out individually. We call this a **Treasure Hunt** because it conveys to workshop participants terminology easily applicable with students. In a similar manner, all "twos" read their assigned section and conduct a **Treasure Hunt** for question number 2. This is repeated for each expert group. After each expert group (i.e. ones, twos, threes and fours) has conducted its treasure hunt and each group member writes down the group response, they return to their original team and conduct a **RoundRobin** sharing of their treasure. In this way, all teams learn the

salient information and prepare themselves for the **Numbered Heads** review activity referred to at the bottom of Figure 14.

## FIGURE 14. ASSIGNMENT 2: INSTRUCTIONAL ORGANIZATION

**ASSIGNMENT 2: Learning about Instructional Organization**

**Cooperative Structure:** Modified Jigsaw

**GOALS:**
1. Learn about the three types of instructional goal structures and how they affect students.
2. Describe the characteristics of the unidimensional and multi-dimensional classroom.
3. Learn about convergent and divergent tasks.

**Resources:** *Resource Handbook*: Chapter 4, "Instructional Organization and Curriculum"

**Instructions:** **Numbered Heads Together** will form expert groups and conduct a **Treasure Hunt** for the questions which corresponds to their number (e.g., ones will do question number 1, etc.): ones read pages 120-129, twos read pages 129-134, threes read pages 134-138, fours read pages 138-139.

**Questions:**
1. What are the three types of "goal structures?" Write them on chartpack and under each one write the advantages and disadvantages. (Hint: read up to page 121.)
2. What are the differences between the unidimensional and the multi-dimensional classroom? Make a table on chartpack and list characteristics.
3. What are the differences between convergent and divergent tasks and when is it best to use them? Put this on chartpack and list an example or two.
4. What are three general ways described by Cohen to counter the problems of the single-ability classroom? Give an example of a strategy for each way. Use chartpack to display your answer.

After each expert group (ones, twos, threes and fours) has completed their questions, return to your teams. A review will be conducted using **Numbered Heads Together** and present what you learned.

**Evaluation:** How would you evaluate these two activities in order to build interdependence and accountability? As a team, come up with several answers.

This chapter provides many tables and strategies workshop participants could use to develop specific plans to be used with students. For example, using the format presented in Figures 13 and 14, (or one of your choice), workshop

participants could use Table 7 (from page 130 of the handbook) to develop an assignment that meets the criteria for the "multi-dimensional classroom." Workshop groups could be organized by grade levels or subject area. The products of groupwork could then be shared through demonstration lessons or simply by compiling assignments into a workshop booklet.

## TABLE 7. MULTI-DIMENSIONAL CLASSROOM CHARACTERISTICS

| Classroom Norms | Unidimensional Classroom | Multi-Dimensional Classroom |
|---|---|---|
| Belief about Student Ability | Competence and ability are viewed along a single dimension where ability is treated as a fixed entity. Some students possess the ability for high academic performance while other students only have low performance ability. | There are many different dimensions to ability. Every child can demonstrate competence and ability on some instructional task. Therefore, many different tasks are used. |
| Teacher Role | Presenter of curriculum content, grader of student accomplishment, manager of resources, and controller of student behavior. | Problem solver, tutor, facilitator, promoting all children to achieve learning objectives and to excel across a broad range of competency areas. |
| Learner Role | Listen, respond, study, and take tests. | Study, participate and discuss, take tests, lead groups, problem solve, and tutor. |
| Basis for Determining Competence | Reading ability is used as the primary gauge of competence and ability. | Competence and ability are recognized in a variety of areas. Students demonstrate competence in reasoning, art, music, idea generation, cooperative group skills, etc. |
| Task Structure | A narrow range of activities are used for learning. These are whole group instruction, independent study, seatwork or small, stable ability groups. | Wide range of different activities for learning where students can demonstrate a variety of competencies. This includes individual, pair, small group and large group activities. |
| Learner Assessment and Evaluation | Grades are arbitrarily curved and normally distributed, which ranks and labels learners. Evaluation is highly visible and comparative. | Focus is on identifying student performance strengths and needs across a wide variety of instructional areas and tasks. Growth is measured by skill mastery, and evaluation procedures are private and individual. |
| Effects on Learners | For lower achieving students there is a negative effect on self-concept, motivation and work effort. High achievers are reinforced and given greater opportunities to learn. Students also develop a dependence on the teacher. | Student academic self concept, sense of efficacy (personal control), achievement and motivation are enhanced. Students learn that everyone has ability and can demonstrate competence in some area. Self-direction and independence are developed. |

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## Notes for Additional Activities

*"I walked around listening to the groups at work. Sometimes the teacher would ask a question which might lead a group into a 'new' discovery. One child came to the teacher with a question and the teacher asked if everyone at her group had the same question. It wasn't until later that I learned the class consisted of 4th-5th-6th graders. They seemed to be working so well together and I don't remember noticing that the groups were dominated by older looking students. Everyone had been contributing. The problems students worked on together did not appear to be beyond the skill level of any of the students. Yet, they were challenging to students at all levels. At the end of the period, groups posted their results and were sharing them with other groups."*

*– On a visit to Joel Anderson's class at Onion Creek School*

# Using Chapter 5

# Instructional Delivery and Grouping

Chapter 4 emphasized how time is used in the classroom and the impact instructional organization has on students. Chapter 5 (Table 8) expands this material by focusing on specific teacher instructional strategies and the quality of their implementation.

Chapter 5 begins with a review of the most commonly used forms of instruction researchers such as John Goodlad have found in their studies of teaching. These forms generally include recitation, discussion and the practice model (often called direct instruction). We chose to begin this review of common instructional strategies for three reasons. First, there is strong evidence that these instructional approaches, when effectively utilized, positively relate to student achievement. Second, these are the approaches most familiar to teachers. And third, instruction in basic skills areas are too often driven by textbooks which integrate recitation, discussion and the practice model into their curriculum design (not necessarily in an effective manner). As a result, instruction often occurs in a pro forma fashion, with too little attention to the process and quality of instructional delivery.

We believe that if teachers were to focus on these familiar approaches, with a greater eye toward a fidelity to the elements of each approach, then the quality of instruction would greatly improve. In addition, recitation, discussion, and the practice model are common building blocks for the majority of instructional delivery approaches used in most classrooms, whether these may be group investigation, independent study, or peer tutoring.

In a similar fashion, we have presented information on grouping from the perspective of what teachers are most familiar with, namely, ability grouping. The material is broadened to cover a wider range of grouping and instructional strategies found effective in single and multigrade classrooms.

## TABLE 8. CONTENTS FOR CHAPTER 5


Methods Teachers Commonly Use ..... 155
Recitation ..... 158
Discussion ..... 161
Practice Model of Instruction ..... 164
A. The Learning Environment ..... 164
1. Teacher Authority ..... 165
2. Task Orientation ..... 165
3. Positive Expectation ..... 165
4. Student Cooperation and Accountability ..... 165
5. Non-negative Affect ..... 166
6. Established Structure ..... 166
B. The Learning Activities ..... 166
1. Establishing a Framework for the Lesson ..... 166
2. Teacher-Student Interactions ..... 167
3. Monitoring ..... 168
Independent Study and Individualized Instruction ..... 170
Using Computers in the Multigrade Classroom ..... 174
Computer as Manager of the Curriculum ..... 177
Computer as Deliverer of the Curriculum ..... 177
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Working with Whole-Class Mixed-Ability Groups ..... 179
Planning for Whole-Class Instruction ..... 180
Ability Grouping ..... 183
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Implications for the Multigrade Classroom ..... 185
When Should Ability Grouping be Used? ..... 185
Ability Grouping Should Be Flexible ..... 186
Alternative Strategies for Grouping ..... 187
Varying Patterns of Grouping ..... 188
The Flexible Skills Group ..... 189
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Cooperative Groupwork ..... 201
Evidence of Effectiveness ..... 205
Planning Groupwork ..... 207
Learning Cooperative Skills ..... 209
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Figure 15 portrays an assignment designed to develop awareness and skill in using recitation effectively. In this assignment, participants are to work in small cooperative workgroups, first learning the materials on recitation and then applying what they have learned. During the application phase (Part II), each team member should have a role to play in order to ensure everyone participates.

**FIGURE 15. ASSIGNMENT ON RECITATION**

**ASSIGNMENT: Learning About Instructional Delivery and Grouping: Recitation**

**Cooperative Structure:** Teammates Consult

**GOALS:**
1. Describe recitation and how it should be used.
2. Develop a recitation and conduct it with a group.

**Resources:** *Resource Handbook*: Chapter 5, "Instructional Delivery and Grouping"

**PART I: Treasure Hunt**

**Instructions:** Three teams will work on recitation. After reading pages 158-161 (Recitation), use the structure **Teammates Consult** to answer the following questions.

**Questions:**
1. In your own words, what are the three steps of a recitation?
2. What is the main purpose of recitation?
3. What are some of the problems for students when recitation is used with the whole class?
4. What are two strategies for dealing with the problems identified in question #3?
5. What role does the teacher play during recitation?

**PART II: Applying What You Have Learned**

**Instructions:** Develop a recitation using the information you have just learned. Use the guide on page 161 (Table 1). Be sure every member of your team has a role to perform. Also, you might think about what cooperative structure you could use with the team you will teach (e.g., **Numbered Heads Together, Teammates Consult**, etc.). Or, you may wish to not have participants work together.

**Evaluation:** How would you evaluate these two activities? As a team, come up with several suggestions.

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The assignment on discussion (Figure 16) follows the same format as recitation, requiring the development of background information and its application. However, the discussion assignment assumes students have completed the activities on recitation. If you choose to use discussion without first using recitation, you will need to make appropriate modifications.

## FIGURE 16. ASSIGNMENT ON DISCUSSION

**ASSIGNMENT: Learning About Instructional Delivery and Grouping: Discussion**

**Cooperative Structure:** Teammates Consult

**GOALS:** 1. Describe discussion and how it should be used.
2. Develop a discussion and conduct it with a group.

**Resources:** *Resource Handbook*: Chapter 5, "Instructional Delivery and Grouping"

**PART I: Treasure Hunt**

**Instructions:** Three teams will work on discussion. After reading pages 161-164 (Discussion), use the structure **Teammates Consult** to answer the following questions.

**Questions:**

1. In your own words, what are the key elements in a discussion?
2. What is the main purpose of discussion?
3. What are some of the ways discussion differs from recitation?
4. What type of questions does discussion usually involve? Provide an example.
5. What role does the teacher play during discussion?

**PART II: Applying What You Have Learned**

**Instructions:** Develop a discussion for some issue related to multigrade instruction. Use the guide on page 163 (Table 2). Be sure every member of your team has a role to perform. Also, you might think about what cooperative structure you could use with the team you will teach (e.g., **Think Pair Share, Teammates Consult,** etc.). Or, you may wish to not have participants work together.

**Evaluation:** How would you evaluate these two activities? As a team, come up with several suggestions.

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The Practice Model of Instruction (Figure 17) broadens the information participants learned from their assignments on recitation and discussion. A central aim of this assignment is the development of a lesson plan format participants can use in their own classrooms when teaching basic skills.

**FIGURE 17. ASSIGNMENT ON THE PRACTICE MODEL OF INSTRUCTION**

**ASSIGNMENT: Learning About Instructional Delivery and Grouping: Basic Practice Model of Instruction**

**Cooperative Structure:** Teammates Consult

**GOALS:**
1. Describe the six key instructional elements of the learning environment.
2. Develop a lesson plan format based on the research for sequencing the learning activities.

**Resources:** *Resource Handbook*: Chapter 5, "Instructional Delivery and Grouping"

**PART I: Describing the Key Elements of the Learning Environment**

**Instructions:** After reading pages 164-166 (ending with Item #6), define each of the terms which follow. Use **Teammates Consult** to develop your response and then write the answer in your own words. After each definition, brainstorm several ways the item relates to your multigrade classroom setting.

**Items:**
1. Teacher Centrality:

   Implications:

2. Task Orientation:

   Implications:

3. Positive Expectation:

   Implications:

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**FIGURE 17 continued**

4. Student Cooperation and Accountability:

   Implications:

5. Nonnegative Affect:

   Implications:

6. Established Structure

   Implications:

**PART II Applying What You Have Learned**

**Instructions:** Read pages 166 (beginning with part B) through 170 (stopping at "Independent Study"). Discuss with teammates each element of the "Learning Activities." Then, as a team, make up a lesson plan format using the three elements you have just read about. (Hint: use the Table on page 161 to guide your decisions). Put the plan format on chartpack and be prepared to explain it to one other group. You will use this lesson plan later, so do a good job.

**Evaluation:** How would you evaluate these two activities? As a team, come up with several suggestions.

However, the components of the practice model can be applied across a wide range of instructional settings, from tutoring to cooperative workgroups. Participants should not view the elements of the practice model narrowly in terms of recitation or only teaching basic skills. For example, the components under "The Learning Environment" such as "positive expectation," "student cooperation and accountability," and "non-negative affect," apply to all teaching situations.

Undoubtedly, you will want to adjust this assignment based on the experience of workshop participants and your particular instructional emphasis.

Our focus in Chapter 5 has been to emphasize the most commonly used instructional strategies. Now we turn to grouping as a way to efficiently organize instruction to better meet the varying needs of students. We begin with whole-class instruction and how it can be used effectively with a wide range of student abilities and needs. In the assignment "Teaching to the Whole-Group," (Figure 18) students first read pages 178 to 182 in the *Resource Handbook* and prepare for a recitation using **Numbered Heads**. You will need to read these pages ahead of participants and prepare a set of recitation questions (using the guidelines for recitation on page 161, Table 1 of the handbook). This will be followed by a brief lecture on whole-class instruction.

**FIGURE 18. ASSIGNMENT: TEACHING TO THE WHOLE CLASS**

**ASSIGNMENT: Teaching to the Whole-Group**

**GOAL:**
1. Learn when it is appropriate to use whole-class instruction with mixed ability groups.
2. Plan a whole-class activity for a mixed aged group.

**Resources:** *Resource Handbook*: Chapter 5, "Instructional Delivery and Grouping"

**Instructions:**
1. Read pages 178-182 on teaching to the whole-group. Be prepared for a brief recitation on the content (**Numbered Heads Together** will be used).
2. A short presentation on planning for whole-class instruction will be given. Teams will then work together, using the adopted textbook or curriculum, to develop a plan for instructing a whole-group of several different levels. A form will be provided along with an example to follow.
3. Teams will then pair up and members will present their lesson plan in pairs (e.g., 1 with 1, 2 with 2, etc.). The team members will provide feedback as to how understandable the plan is and any suggestions for helping it work. Pair members will then reverse, so that the person who did not present a lesson plan will do so.

**Evaluation:** As a team, list several ways this assignment could be evaluated. Think about having the team evaluate itself on how well members participated. Was a plan completed? What was the quality of the plan?

The purpose of this presentation is for participants to understand the differences between "closed" (convergent) and "open" (divergent) task activities and their application to whole-class instruction. Figure 19 provides an overhead transparency aimed at clarifying these differences. It is important to stress that whole-class instruction with mixed ability groups has several purposes. First, it can save teacher time provided instruction incorporates divergent tasks and is aimed at the similarity of needs across groups. Second, it allows the teacher to maintain contact with all students. It also helps develop a family-like atmosphere, which enhances student relations characterized by positive interdependence.

**FIGURE 19. CLOSED AND OPEN TASK ACTIVITIES**

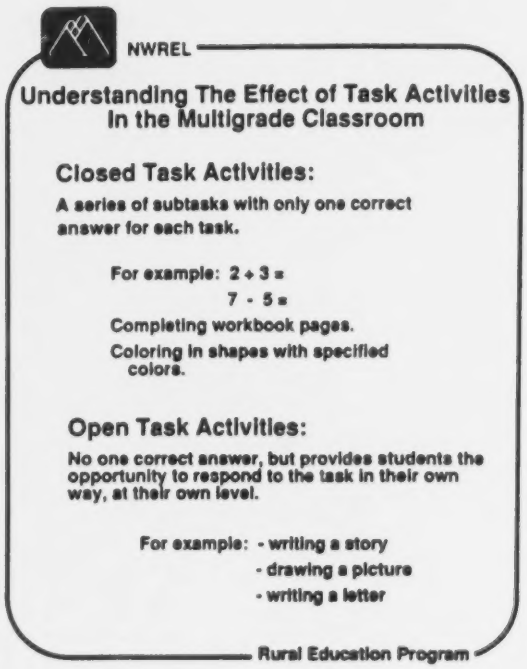

NWREL
Understanding The Effect of Task Activities In the Multigrade Classroom
Closed Task Activities:
A series of subtasks with only one correct answer for each task.
For example: 2 + 3 =
7 - 5 =
Completing workbook pages.
Coloring in shapes with specified colors.
Open Task Activities:
No one correct answer, but provides students the opportunity to respond to the task in their own way, at their own level.
For example: - writing a story
- drawing a picture
- writing a letter
Rural Education Program

Figure 19 provides a flowchart for planning whole-class instruction with multiple performance levels in a single class. All students will be working in the

same subject (an integrated science-writing), they will focus on the same topic (sea creatures), and they will be presented the same introductory lesson. However, independent small group or individual seat work activities will address the different levels of student performance in the class.

On page 182 in the *Resource Handbook* an activity called "clustering" helps participants to think of curriculum in a more integrative fashion. When teams develop clusters around a theme such as "change" or a topic such as "whales," it increases understanding of how to integrate subject area content. In addition, beginning with clustering develops motivation and models a simple strategy for classroom use.

**FIGURE 20. FLOWCHART FOR WHOLE-CLASS INSTRUCTIONAL PLANNING**

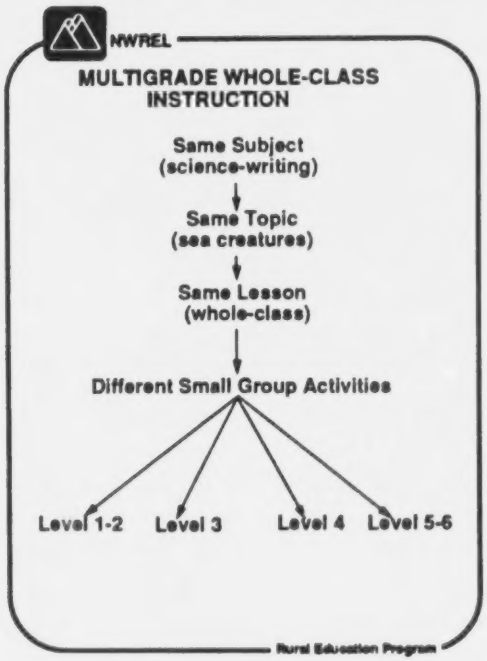
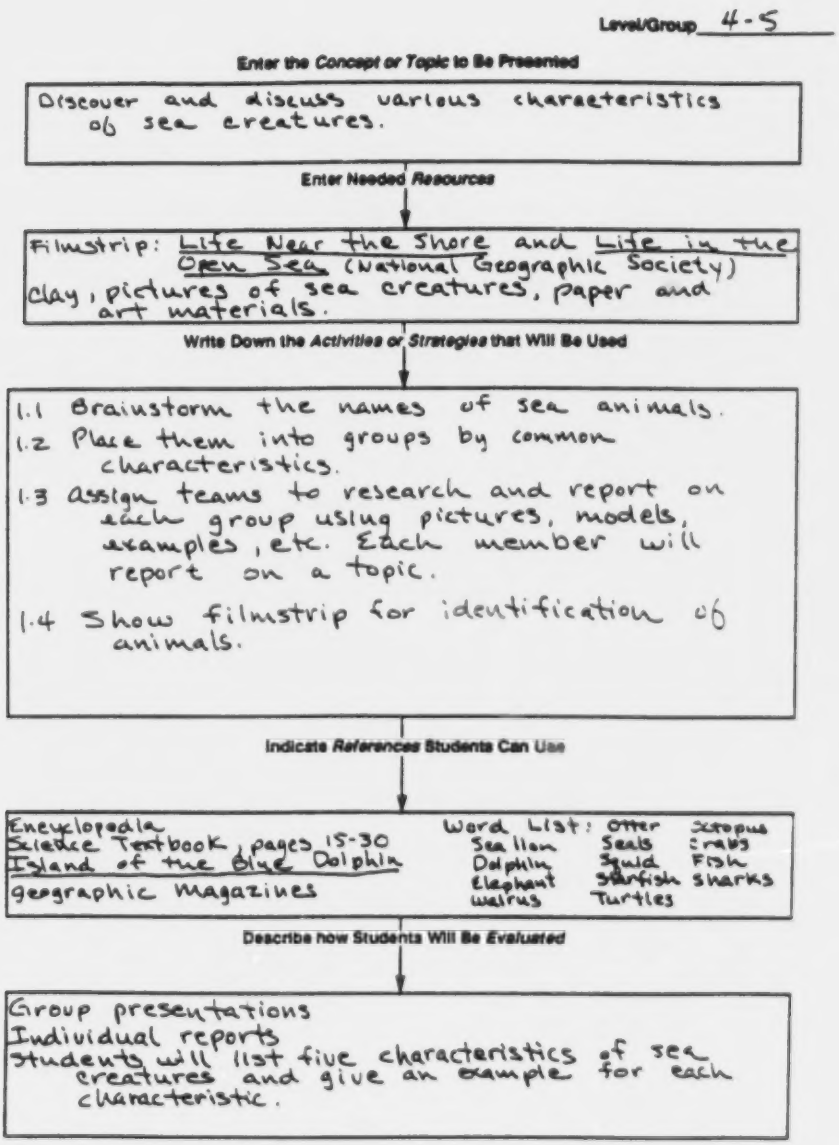



Figure 21 provides a completed planning form for an individual level. Note that activities 1.1 to 1.4 are divergent tasks and can be completed by a wide

range of students, with expected outcomes varying by performance level. The multigrade teacher would need to complete a planning form for each level.

**FIGURE 21. PLANNING FORM FOR INDIVIDUAL LEVELS**


Level/Group 4-5
Enter the Concept or Topic to Be Presented
Discover and discuss various characteristics of sea creatures.
Enter Needed Resources
Filmstrip: Life Near the Shore and Life in the Open Sea (National Geographic Society)
Clay, pictures of sea creatures, paper and art materials.
Write Down the Activities or Strategies that Will Be Used
1.1 Brainstorm the names of sea animals.
1.2 Place them into groups by common characteristics.
1.3 Assign teams to research and report on each group using pictures, models, examples, etc. Each member will report on a topic.
1.4 Show filmstrip for identification of animals.
Indicate References Students Can Use
Encyclopedia
Science Textbook, pages 15-30
Island of the Blue Dolphin
Geographic Magazines
Word List: Otter, Octopus, Seal Lion, Seals, Crabs, Dolphin, Squid, Fish, Elephant, Starfish, Sharks, Walrus, Turtles
Describe how Students Will Be Evaluated
Group presentations
Individual reports
Students will list five characteristics of sea creatures and give an example for each characteristic.

(adapted from Fogarty, M. (1979). Small schools: Organization and teaching methods.(ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 223 395)

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Figure 22 provides another self-instructional planning form that is more general than Figure 21 in that it does not have room for resources or evaluation. However, it does allow for placing all activities on a single page and may be most beneficial for the experienced teacher or the individual desiring to see the "big picture." (Blank planning forms and the overhead transparencies illustrated in Figures 21 and 22 have been included in the appendix).

## FIGURE 22. CROSS LEVEL PLANNING FORM

Instructions: The whole school can be taught together where a common need can be found across the different levels. In general, divergent or open ended tasks are the most appropriate.

1. Determine something they all need and write it in the box below entitled, "General Presentation Topic or Concept."
2. Decide how you will present the topic or concept to all students - game format, discussion, sharing session, etc. and put this in your lesson plan.
3. Enter the activities for each level into the "Level/Group" boxes found below. If your lesson is quite detailed, you may wish to use the "Level/Group Planning Form (a separate page) by filling in the resources, strategies, references, and evaluation for each level.
4. Prepare the leveled activities and decide how each will be introduced. For younger students, you may want to directly teach what is to be done. For older, more self-directed students, instructions could be written.

General Presentation Topic or Concept

Learn about biographies. Discuss if students have ever read or heard a story about a real person. Get examples.

Draw a picture of a friend or relative. Develop several questions to ask of the person. Interview. Write questions – Make biography

Activity for Level/Group 1-2

Read biography. Write up 10 question/answer cards based on reading. Present information to a friend.

Activity for Level/Group 3-4

Write a biography of your favorite animal – Include key points from our discussion.

Activity for Level/Group 5

Pick a favorite story character and write a biography. Include key points from our discussion.

Activity for Level/Group 6

(adapted from Fogarty, M. (1979). Small schools: Organization and teaching methods.(ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 223 388)



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In the last activity, teams of participants read four pages (183-187) on ability grouping and discuss what implications the information may have for multigrade instruction (Figure 23). Following their discussion, each team drafts four convergent questions and answers which will be given to another team (i.e. **Send-A-Problem**). Teams review and answer the questions they received from neighboring teams. The assignment ends with a discussion of evaluation and a brief presentation by the workshop facilitator regarding ability grouping and the multigrade classroom. This presentation works best if it links ability grouping to the material in the handbook on "Alternative Strategies for Grouping" (pages 187-192).

## FIGURE 23. ASSIGNMENT ON USING ABILITY GROUPING

**ASSIGNMENT: Using Ability Groups in the Multigrade Classroom**

**GOALS:**
1. Describe several forms of ability grouping.
2. Learn when to use ability grouping and how to set it up.

**Resources:** *Resource Handbook*: Chapter 5, "Instructional Delivery and Grouping"

**Instructions:**
1. Read pages 183 to 187 (up to "Alternative Strategies for Grouping"), and discuss the implications this information has for multigrade teaching. Each team writes four convergent questions which will be given to another team (**Send-A-Problem**). Your questions should focus on content which your team felt is especially important for teaching a multigrade classroom. Write the answers to your questions on a separate piece of paper.

2. Pass your questions to a neighboring team. When your team receives a set of questions, use the **Teammates Consult** structure to answer the questions. However, teams will only need to write down one answer. Assign the following roles: reader, writer, task master/praiser, and editor. When a team answers the questions, they are to request the answer key from the other team. They then check their answers. If there are wrong answers, they seek help from the other team.

**Evaluation:** If you did this with your students, how would you assess what they learned?

How would you assess how well teams worked together?

**Debriefing:** How could this activity be used in a multigrade classroom?

**and**

**Presentation:** Presenter will discuss the grouping implications for multigrade instruction.

The assignments and activities for using Chapter 5 represent a starting point in the creation of staff development materials for use with multigrade educators. Areas such as learning centers (pages 193-194 in the handbook), case examples of grouping (pages 194-200), and planning cooperative workgroups (pages 207-214) will require further development, as will the many other topics described in Chapter 5. Whatever content you may chose to use and develop, we recommend incorporating activities that facilitate the use of craft knowledge participants bring to staff development.

## Notes for Additional Activities

*"I constantly monitor observable self-management activities such as:*

- *Students keep track of their own schedules and are ready for group instruction time with the teacher.*
- *Students distribute their tasks over an hour and then go to self-correcting centers, where they get immediate feedback, record their own progress, and receive stamps and stickers.*
- *Students must initiate effort, find materials, use references, and meet their own study goals.*
- *Students are held accountable for homework and receive tangible rewards.*
- *Students who manage their time well receive rewards such as recess and less homework."*

*– Pat Reck*
*multigrade teacher*

# Using Chapter 6

# Self-Directed Learning

Self-direction in the multigrade classroom is essential if the teacher is to be successfull at meeting the needs of students. Chapter 6 defines self-direction, its benefit to students and teachers, and ways to nurture its development in the classroom (Table 9).

**TABLE 9. CONTENTS FOR CHAPTER 6**


What is Self-Directed Learning? ..... 226
Conditions Which Promote Self-Directed Learning ..... 227
Issues and Concerns ..... 228
Self-Directed Learning Behaviors ..... 229
Student Benefits ..... 232
Implications for Classrooms ..... 233
Activities for Developing Self-Direction ..... 235
Conclusion ..... 237
References ..... 239
Resources ..... 240


The material provided in Chapter 6 is most effective when participants work in small teams to review, identify, and/or develop self-direction strategies for their classrooms. In addition, since the activities and assignments previously discussed emphasize self-direction through individual and small workgroup tasks, participants have been sufficiently prepared to respond independently to this material. Nonetheless, it is important to consider the following suggestions for your consideration:

- Before reading this chapter, participants should develop a profile of what the self-directed individual looks like in a classroom and then link their profile with the content of the chapter. How was their profile the same? Different?
- What other chapters in the handbook relate to self-direction and how can they be used to facilitate development of awareness and strategies in workshop participants? (Especially see Classroom Organization, Instructional Delivery, and Grouping and Planning and Using Peer Tutoring)

- How can classroom rules be developed so they both model and emphasize self-direction?
- How does the role the teacher plays in instruction effect student self-direction?
- Have participants link the activities on self-direction for the teacher and the students (Tables 5 and 6 on pages 236 and 237 in the handbook) with specific activities suggested in other sections of the handbook.
- Have participants develop plans for implementing the suggestions specified in Tables 5 and 6 in the handbook on pages 236 and 237.

## Notes for Additional Activities

*"Peer tutoring is any instance when a student assists another student in learning. This can occur spontaneously (during recess for example) or as a planned part of a day's lesson."*

*– Monte Phoenix*
*multigrade teacher*

*"In math and reading, I use upper level students to tutor the lower level ones. For example, the 4th graders tutor the 1st graders and the 8th graders tutor the 5th graders. There are times I will invite the older students to come to the morning session and help the younger kids. I find it really good because there is language that only the students understand."*

*– James Makphie*
*multigrade teacher*
*Marjuro, Marshall Islands*

# Using Chapter 7

# Planning and Using Peer Tutoring

Planning and Using Peer Tutoring (Table 10) provides an interactive format where the reader is provided with background information and research on tutoring, followed by a series of questions which focus on planning and implementing peer tutoring. Because of its interactive nature, Chapter 7 may be used in a self-directed and independent manner. However, we suggest that an introductory discussion of tutoring in everyday life be conducted, followed by an account of how it may be used in the classroom. An illustration may provide insight into the importance of this introductory strategy.

**TABLE 10. CONTENTS FOR CHAPTER 7**


What is Peer Tutoring? ..... 244
- Incidental Peer Tutoring ..... 245
- Structured Tutoring ..... 247

What Tutoring Conditions Produce the Greatest Success? ..... 247
- What Effect Does Tutoring Have on the Tutor and the Learner? ..... 248
- What Are the Characteristics of a Successful Peer Tutoring Program? ..... 249

Developing a Peer Tutoring Program in Your Classroom ..... 250
- Setting Goals and Choosing Learning Objectives ..... 251
- Deciding Who Will Be Involved in Tutoring ..... 252
- Deciding Where Tutoring Will Take Place ..... 254
- Scheduling the Tutoring Sessions ..... 255
- Deciding What Subjects Will Be Tutored ..... 255
- Deciding on Tutoring Materials, Procedures and Strategies ..... 256
  - Materials ..... 256
  - Tutor Training (keep it brief) ..... 257
  - Tutoring Approaches and Strategies ..... 257
  - Monitoring/Feedback ..... 258
  - Evaluation ..... 259

Conclusion ..... 260

References ..... 261


Upon completion of this chapter, we had a team of four multigrade teachers review the material. Their evaluation was not positive. They said that

tutoring in their classrooms was not structured, but was rather informal, occuring on an incidental needs basis. Through a series of questions, it became clear that "incidental" tutoring had more structure and complexity to it than even the teachers realized. For one thing, because of the small class size and the proximity to the teacher, tutors learned how to work with other students by emulating what the teacher did during instruction. In addition, the teacher could monitor tutoring activities and provide coaching assistance as needed. What these teachers described reflected many of the guidelines and suggestions outlined in this chapter. But in their classrooms, these guidelines had been learned and internalized by the teachers so they were an automatic part of everyday activity.

As a result of the feedback from these multigrade teachers, a section was added to the tutoring chapter which discusses peer tutoring as an incidental activity within the everyday flow of instruction. From our perspective of working with a wide variety of multigrade teachers, we feel that peer tutoring has its greatest potential when taken beyond the "incidental" to include a conscious, deliberate effort to structure the learning environment.

During staff development activities, we used the research review on tutoring (pages 248 to 250 in the handbook) as a means of developing the motivational base needed for pursuing the development of a tutoring plan. The guidelines for implementing peer tutoring activities (pages 250 to 260 in the handbook) are then introduced for helping structure the development of a peer tutoring action plan.

The important point to emphasize is that workshop participants understand the power peer tutoring holds for improving student outcomes, and that they leave the workshop with a plan, no matter how simple, for implementing a tutoring activity.

## Notes for Additional Activities

## CONCLUSION

Our staff development work with multigrade educators and those interested in the potential of multigrade instruction clearly indicates that a void exists regarding multigrade resources. We also learned that many schools, both rural and metropolitan, are multigraded. These schools contain a wealth of expertise just waiting to be shared. In developing the *Resource Handbook* and the accompanying training guide, we have tried to use this expertise whenever possible. However, we realize the handbook and trainer's guide are only the beginning, representing a surface introduction to the complexity of issues facing staff developers and teachers concerned about multigrade classroom instruction.

We hope that in using these multigrade materials you will rely on the experience and the resources participants bring to workshops. It is for this reason that cooperative learning structures constitute the core activities in this training guide, for they encourage a reciprocal exchange of participant experience and craft knowledge. If some of these cooperative learning structures are new or discomforting, we suggest you consult the work of Kagan (1989) for more detail than what has been presented in this training guide.

## APPENDIX

1. Personal Goal Setting Worksheet
2. Multigrade Research Awareness Rating Activity
3. Groupwork Assignment for Multigrade Research
4. Classroom Organization Activity
5. Cross Reference Matrix
6. Illustration of Observation Checklist
7. Assignment 1: Scheduling Classroom Time
8. Assignment 2: Instructional Organization
9. Assignments on Recitation
10. Assignment on Discussion
11. Assignment on the Practice Model of Instruction
12. Assignment: Teaching to the Whole Class
13. Closed and Open Task Activities
14. Flowchart for Whole-Class Instructional Planning
15. Planning Form for Individual Levels
16. Cross Level Planning Form
17. Assignment on Using Ability Grouping

## SETTING A GOAL FOR IMPROVEMENT

**Name** _____ **Date** _____

1. GOAL (What do you desire to do?):

2. YOUR PLAN (What will you do to achieve the goal):

3. EVALUATION (How will you know you have achieved your goal?):

Name_____ School_____

July 12, 1990 State/County_____

**Part I: Rating importance of selected topics.**

Circle the appropriate number, where 4 means "very important" and 1 means "not important."

| **In my multigrade classroom . . .** | not important | | | very important |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. organizing the classroom for student independence is: | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 2. peer tutoring is: | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 3. developing independence is: | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 4. grouping students across grade levels is: | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 5. organizing instruction to enhance cooperation is: | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 6. developing student interdependence is: | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 7. predictable instructional patterns are: | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

**Part II: True and False (circle the correct one)**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Graded classrooms have grown from the needs of students. | T | F |
| 2. Most multigrade teachers have been trained for working with multiple grades at the same time. | T | F |
| 3. Instructional complexity increases with the number of grades taught together in the same classroom. | T | F |
| 4. Multigrade students perform significantly better than single grade students in the basic skills area. | T | F |
| 5. Multigrade classrooms tend to enhance student attitudes toward school, peer relations, and self-concept. | T | F |
| 6. Most teachers are adequately prepared for teaching small groups. | T | F |
| 7. Whole-class instruction is best with convergent tasks. | T | F |

**ASSIGNMENT: Reviewing the Research on Multigrade Instruction**

**GOAL:** Learn about the research on multigrade instruction and describe the implications you find for your own teaching situations.

**RESOURCES**: *Resource Handbook*: Introduction (page IX ff) and Chapter 1

**INSTRUCTIONS**. All groups will read the Introduction. In addition, you will be given additional sections to read. Mark these on the table of contents.

Use the Notes/Implications section below to jot down your ideas for the different sections you read.

After reading the Introduction, come to agreement as a group on at least 3 key issues that relate to your own teaching situation. These will be shared with the total group.

After reading the sections assigned to your team, prepare and give a short presentation of the key points found. Each team will do a presentation over their reading.

| Section | NOTES/IMPLICATIONS |
|---|---|
| | |
| **REPORT** | |
| **EVALUATION** | How could this assignment (your performance) be evaluated? |

## ASSIGNMENT: Learning about Classroom Organization

**GOAL:** 1. Learn about organizing your classroom.
2. Design a classroom floor plan.

**Resources:** *Resource Handbook:* Chapter 2, "Classroom Organization"

### PART I

**Instructions:** Read pages 55-69 (through the conclusion) in "Classroom Organization." Using the cooperative structure, **Teammates Consult**, answer the following questions. Remember to write the answers in your own words after the team decides on the answer.

**Question:**

1. Why is it important to design the way you want your classroom organized and to explain the organization to your students?
2. Describe the "Activity Centered Approach" to classroom organization?
3. Name the six types of activities found in most classrooms.
4. Why should a teacher plan for traffic patterns?
5. Name at least two types of activity centers you might use in your classroom and why you would use them. (Hint: each team member may have a slightly different answer.)

### PART II

**Instructions:** Read pages 65-69 (starting with "Designing your own room"). Think about how you would like to arrange your classroom. Discuss it with your teammates. Then, complete steps 1-3 for designing your room. After you have completed designing your room, pair up and conduct a **Three-Step Interview** regarding the the design of your partners' classroom.

**Evaluation:** How would you evaluate these two activities in order to build interdependence and accountability? As a team, come up with several answers.

| TOPIC AREA | RESOURCE HANDBOOK LOCATION: Introduction | Chapter 1 | Chapter 2 | Chapter 3 | Chapter 4 | Chapter 5 | Chapter 6 | Chapter 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Whole Class Instruction | | 36ff | | | | 179 | | |
| Teacher-led small groups | | 31ff | | 97ff 102ff | | 183 | | |
| Cooperative workgroups | | | | | 124 | 201 | | |
| Individual seatwork (independent work) | | 25ff | | | | 193 | | |
| Transitions between activities | | | 55 | | 112ff | | | |
| Room and equipment use | | | 55 | 94ff | | | | |
| Tutoring students | | | | | | | | 244 |
| Giving/receiving assignments | | | | | | | | |
| Case Examples | | | | | | | | |
| Rules | | | 94ff | | | | | |
| Schedules | | | | 112-120 | | | | |
| Other: | | | | | | | | |

## IV. Procedures During Small Groups

### A. Movement Into and Out of Groups

| | |
|---|---|
| 1. *How will students know when to come to their groups?* | 1. |
| 2. What procedures, rules, and teacher signals (cues) will need to be taught to students regarding movement to and from small groups? | 2. |
| 3. What will students do with materials used prior to coming to a group? | 3. |

### B. Bringing Materials to the Group

| | |
|---|---|
| 1. What materials or supplies should students bring or not bring to the group and how will you explain this beforehand? | 1. |

### C. Expected Behavior in Small Groups

| | |
|---|---|
| 1. How and when can students ask questions and give responses? | 1. |
| 2. What expectations do you have for how students are to work together and how will you convey your expectations so students learn these? | 2. |

### D. Expected Behavior of Students Not Meeting in a Group with the Teacher

| | |
|---|---|
| 1. What will the rest of the class be doing while you are meeting with a small group that will reduce its need for you? | 1. |
| 2. What will you expect regarding noise level and student access to you? | 2. |
| 3. How will students learn your expectations regarding behavior when not in a teacher group (e.g., getting help, noise, leaving the room, etc.)? | 3. |



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## ASSIGNMENT 1: Learning about Instructional Organization

**GOAL:**
1. Learn what makes for the effective use of time in the classroom.
2. Learn how to allocate time for learning.
3. Develop a classroom schedule.

**Resources:** *Resource Handbook*: Chapter 4, "Instructional Organization and Curriculum"

### PART I: Effective Use of Instructional Time

**Instructions:** Read pages 107-115. Using the cooperative structure, **Teammates Consult**, answer the questions and complete the tasks described below. Remember to write the answers in your own words after the team decides on the answer.

**Questions/: Tasks**

1. What are the three key dimensions of effectively using time in the classroom?

2. Figure the available instructional minutes for your practicum teaching (p.11). (Hint: you may need to discuss this with a colleague in terms of dismissal times, breaks, snack, etc.)

3. Decide on instructional priorities (p.112) and figure the amount of time that will be spent on each priority (e.g., reading, writing, grammar, speaking, etc.) It may be helpful to review pages 136-141 ("The Planned Curriculum" section) and discuss with a colleague.

**Evaluation:** How would you evaluate these two activities in order to build interdependence and accountability? As a team, come up with several answers.

### PART II: Developing an Instructional Schedule

**Instructions:** As a team, develop an instructional schedule that can be clearly understood by students. Use pages 113-115 as a guide. Be prepared to share your schedule with the whole group.

**Evaluation:** How would you evaluate these two activities in order to build interdependence and accountability? As a team, come up with several answers.

## ASSIGNMENT 2: Learning about Instructional Organization

**Cooperative Structure:** Modified Jigsaw

**GOALS:**
1. Learn about the three types of instructional goal structures and how they affect students.
2. Describe the characteristics of the unidimensional and multi-dimensional classroom.
3. Learn about convergent and divergent tasks.

**Resources:** *Resource Handbook*: Chapter 4, "Instructional Organization and Curriculum"

**Instructions:** **Numbered Heads Together** will form expert groups and conduct a **Treasure Hunt** for the questions which corresponds to their number (e.g., ones will do question number 1, etc.): ones read pages 120-129, twos read pages 129-134, threes read pages 134-138, fours read pages 138-139.

**Questions:**
1. What are the three types of "goal structures?" Write them on chartpack and under each one write the advantages and disadvantages. (Hint: read up to page 121.)
2. What are the differences between the unidimensional and the multi-dimensional classroom? Make a table on chartpack and list characteristics.
3. What are the differences between convergent and divergent tasks and when is it best to use them? Put this on chartpack and list an example or two.
4. What are three general ways described by Cohen to counter the problems of the single-ability classroom? Give an example of a strategy for each way. Use chartpack to display your answer.

After each expert group (ones, twos, threes and fours) has completed their questions, return to your teams. A review will be conducted using **Numbered Heads Together** and present what you learned.

**Evaluation:** How would you evaluate these two activities in order to build interdependence and accountability? As a team, come up with several answers.

**ASSIGNMENT: Learning About Instructional Delivery and Grouping: Recitation**

**Cooperative Structure:** Teammates Consult

**GOALS:**
1. Describe recitation and how it should be used.
2. Develop a recitation and conduct it with a group.

**Resources:** *Resource Handbook*: Chapter 5, "Instructional Delivery and Grouping"

## PART I: Treasure Hunt

**Instructions:** Three teams will work on recitation. After reading pages 158-161 (Recitation), use the structure **Teammates Consult** to answer the following questions.

**Questions:**

1. In your own words, what are the three steps of a recitation?
2. What is the main purpose of recitation?
3. What are some of the problems for students when recitation is used with the whole class?
4. What are two strategies for dealing with the problems identified in question #3?
5. What role does the teacher play during recitation?

## PART II: Applying What You Have Learned

**Instructions:** Develop a recitation using the information you have just learned. Use the guide on page 161 (Table 1). Be sure every member of your team has a role to perform. Also, you might think about what cooperative structure you could use with the team you will teach (e.g., **Numbered Heads Together, Teammates Consult**, etc.). Or, you may wish to not have participants work together.

**Evaluation:** How would you evaluate these two activities? As a team, come up with several suggestions.

**ASSIGNMENT: Learning About Instructional Delivery and Grouping: Discussion**

**Cooperative Structure:** Teammates Consult

**GOALS:**
1. Describe discussion and how it should be used.
2. Develop a discussion and conduct it with a group.

**Resources:** *Resource Handbook*: Chapter 5, "Instructional Delivery and Grouping"

## PART I: Treasure Hunt

**Instructions:** Three teams will work on discussion. After reading pages 161-164 (Discussion), use the structure **Teammates Consult** to answer the following questions.

**Questions:**
1. In your own words, what are the key elements in a discussion?
2. What is the main purpose of discussion?
3. What are some of the ways discussion differs from recitation?
4. What type of questions does discussion usually involve? Provide an example.
5. What role does the teacher play during discussion?

## PART II: Applying What You Have Learned

**Instructions:** Develop a discussion for some issue related to multigrade instruction. Use the guide on page 163 (Table 2). Be sure every member of your team has a role to perform. Also, you might think about what cooperative structure you could use with the team you will teach (e.g., **Think Pair Share, Teammates Consult,** etc.). Or, you may wish to not have participants work together.

**Evaluation:** How would you evaluate these two activities? As a team, come up with several suggestions.

**ASSIGNMENT: Learning About Instructional Delivery and Grouping: Basic Practice Model of Instruction**

**Cooperative Structure:** Teammates Consult

**GOALS:**
1. Describe the six key instructional elements of the learning environment.
2. Develop a lesson plan format based on the research for sequencing the learning activities.

**Resources:** *Resource Handbook*: Chapter 5, "Instructional Delivery and Grouping"

**PART I: Describing the Key Elements of the Learning Environment**

**Instructions:** After reading pages 164-166 (ending with Item #6), define each of the terms which follow. Use **Teammates Consult** to develop your response and then write the answer in your own words. After each definition, brainstorm several ways the item relates to your multigrade classroom setting.

**Items:** 1. Teacher Centrality:

Implications:

2. Task Orientation:

Implications:

3. Positive Expectation:

Implications:

4. Student Cooperation and Accountability:

Implications:

5. Nonnegative Affect:

Implications:

6. Established Structure

Implications:

**PART II Applying What You Have Learned**

**Instructions:** Read pages 166 (beginning with part B) through 170 (stopping at "Independent Study"). Discuss with teammates each element of the "Learning Activities." Then, as a team, make up a lesson plan format using the three elements you have just read about. (Hint: use the Table on page 161 to guide your decisions). Put the plan format on chartpack and be prepared to explain it to one other group. You will use this lesson plan later, so do a good job.

**Evaluation:** How would you evaluate these two activities? As a team, come up with several suggestions.

**ASSIGNMENT: Teaching to the Whole-Group**

**GOAL:**
1. Learn when it is appropriate to use whole-class instruction with mixed ability groups.
2. Plan a whole-class activity for a mixed aged group.

**Resources:** *Resource Handbook*: Chapter 5, "Instructional Delivery and Grouping'

**Instructions:**

1. Read pages 178-182 on teaching to the whole-group. Be prepared for a brief recitation on the content (**Numbered Heads Together** will be used).

2. A short presentation on planning for whole-class instruction will be given. Teams will then work together, using the adopted textbook or curriculum, to develop a plan for instructing a whole-group of several different levels. A form will be provided along with an example to follow.

3. Teams will then pair up and members will present their lesson plan in pairs (e.g., 1 with 1, 2 with 2, etc.). The team members will provide feedback as to how understandable the plan is and any suggestions for helping it work. Pair members will then reverse, so that the person who did not present a lesson plan will do so.

**Evaluation:** As a team, list several ways this assignment could be evaluated. Think about having the team evaluate itself on how well members participated. Was a plan completed? What was the quality of the plan?

NWREL

# Understanding The Effect of Task Activities In the Multigrade Classroom

## Closed Task Activities:

**A series of subtasks with only one correct answer for each task.**

**For example: 2 + 3 =**

**7 - 5 =**

**Completing workbook pages.**

**Coloring in shapes with specified colors.**

## Open Task Activities:

**No one correct answer, but provides students the opportunity to respond to the task in their own way, at their own level.**

**For example: - writing a story**

**- drawing a picture**

**- writing a letter**

**Rural Education Program**

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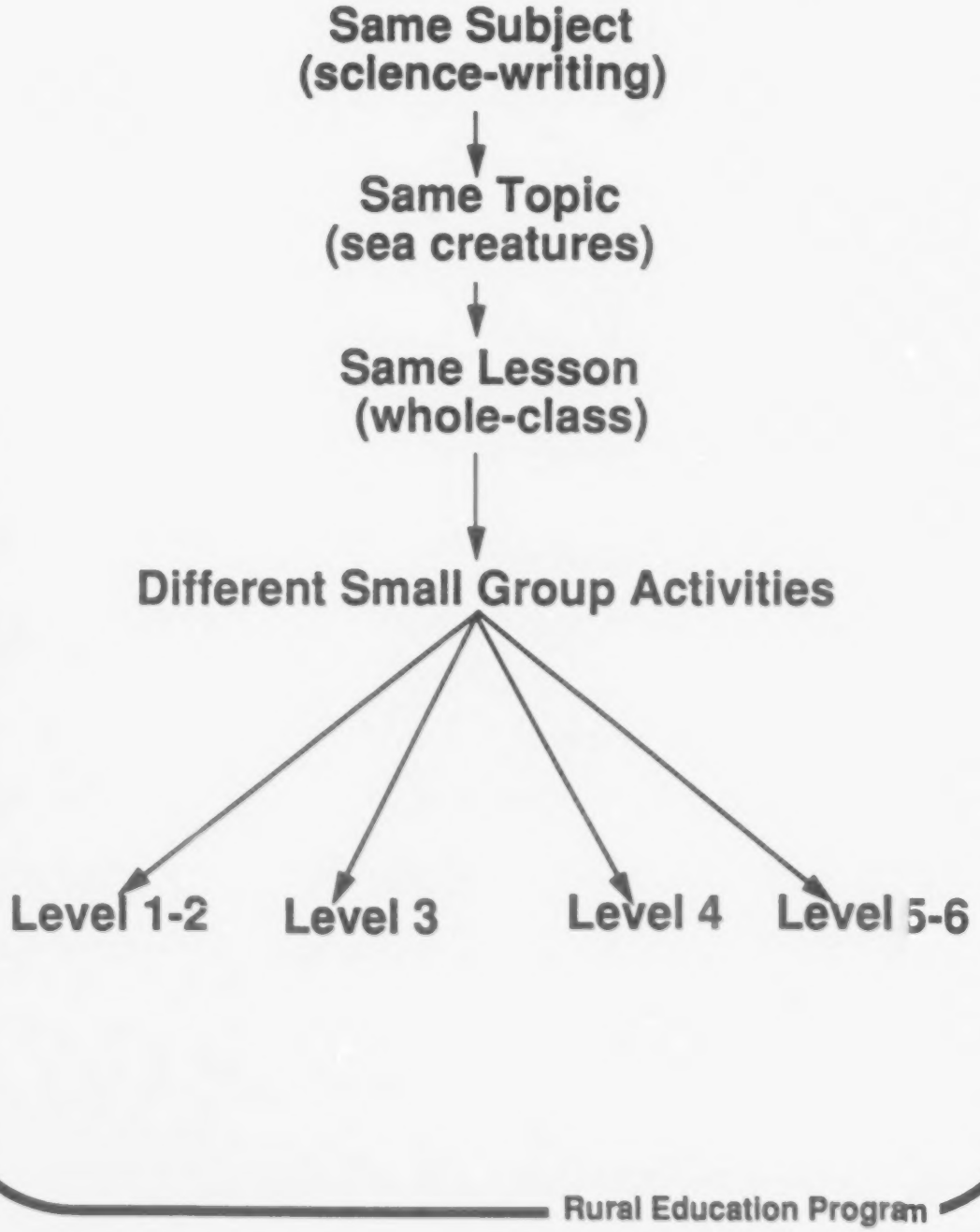
# MULTIGRADE WHOLE-CLASS INSTRUCTION




Rural Education Program

## LEVEL/GROUP PLANNING FORM

Level/Group_____

Enter the *Concept or Topic* to Be Presented

Enter Needed *Resources*

Write Down the *Activities or Strategies* that Will Be Used

Indicate *References* Students Can Use

Describe how Students Will Be *Evaluated*

Adapted from Fogarty, M. (1979). Small schools: Organization and Teaching methods.(ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 223 535)

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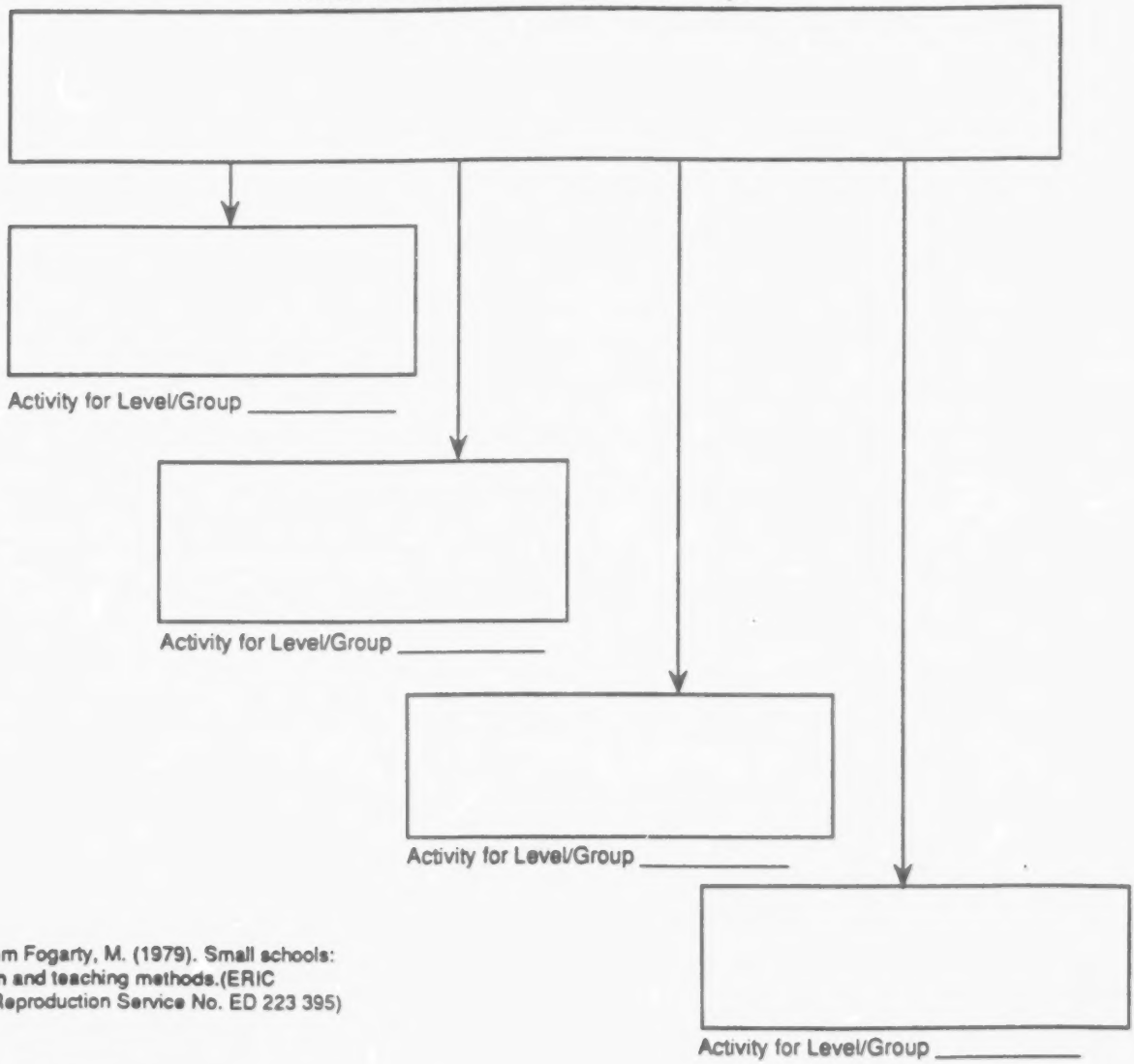
## CROSS LEVEL/GROUP PLANNING FORM

tructions: The whole school can be taught together where a common need can be found across the different levels. In general, divergent or open ended tasks are the most appropriate.

- Determine something they all need and write it in the box below entitled, "General Presentation Topic or Concept."
- Decide how you will present the topic or concept to all students - game format, discussion, sharing session, etc. and put this in your lesson plan.
- Enter the activities for each level into the "Level/Group" boxes found below. If your lesson is quite detailed, you may wish to use the "Level/Group Planning Form (a separate page) by filling in the resources, strategies, references, and evaluation for each level.
- Prepare the leveled activities and decide how each will be introduced. For younger students, you may want to directly teach what is to be done. For older, more self-directed students, instructions could be written.

General Presentation Topic or Concept

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**ASSIGNMENT: Using Ability Groups in the Multigrade Classroom**

**GOALS:**
1. Describe several forms of ability grouping.
2. Learn when to use ability grouping and how to set it up.

**Resources:** *Resource Handbook*: Chapter 5, "Instructional Delivery and Grouping"

**Instructions:**
1. Read pages 183 to 187 (up to "Alternative Strategies for Grouping"), and discuss the implications this information has for multigrade teaching. Each team writes four convergent questions which will be given to another team (**Send-A-Problem**). Your questions should focus on content which your team felt is especially important for teaching a multigrade classroom. Write the answers to your questions on a separate piece of paper.

2. Pass your questions to a neighboring team. When your team receives a set of questions, use the **Teammates Consult** structure to answer the questions. However, teams will only need to write down one answer. Assign the following roles: reader, writer, task master/praiser, and editor. When a team answers the questions, they are to request the answer key from the other team. They then check their answers. If there are wrong answers, they seek help from the other team.

**Evaluation:** If you did this with your students, how would you assess what they learned?

How would you assess how well teams worked together?

**Debriefing:** How could this activity be used in a multigrade classroom?

**and**

**Presentation:** Presenter will discuss the grouping implications for multigrade instruction.

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